

# *The Colorado Quarterly*

THE UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO

THOMAS HORNSBY FERRIL

**The Challenge of the Pioneer Spirit**

COLONEL DANIEL V. MACDONALD

**Air Forces in the Coming Era of Nuclear Balance**

JENKIN LLOYD JONES

**God Bless the Advertisers**

BRIAN ELLIOTT

**Australia Touches the Tape**

TYRUS HILLWAY

**Hollywood Hunts the White Whale**

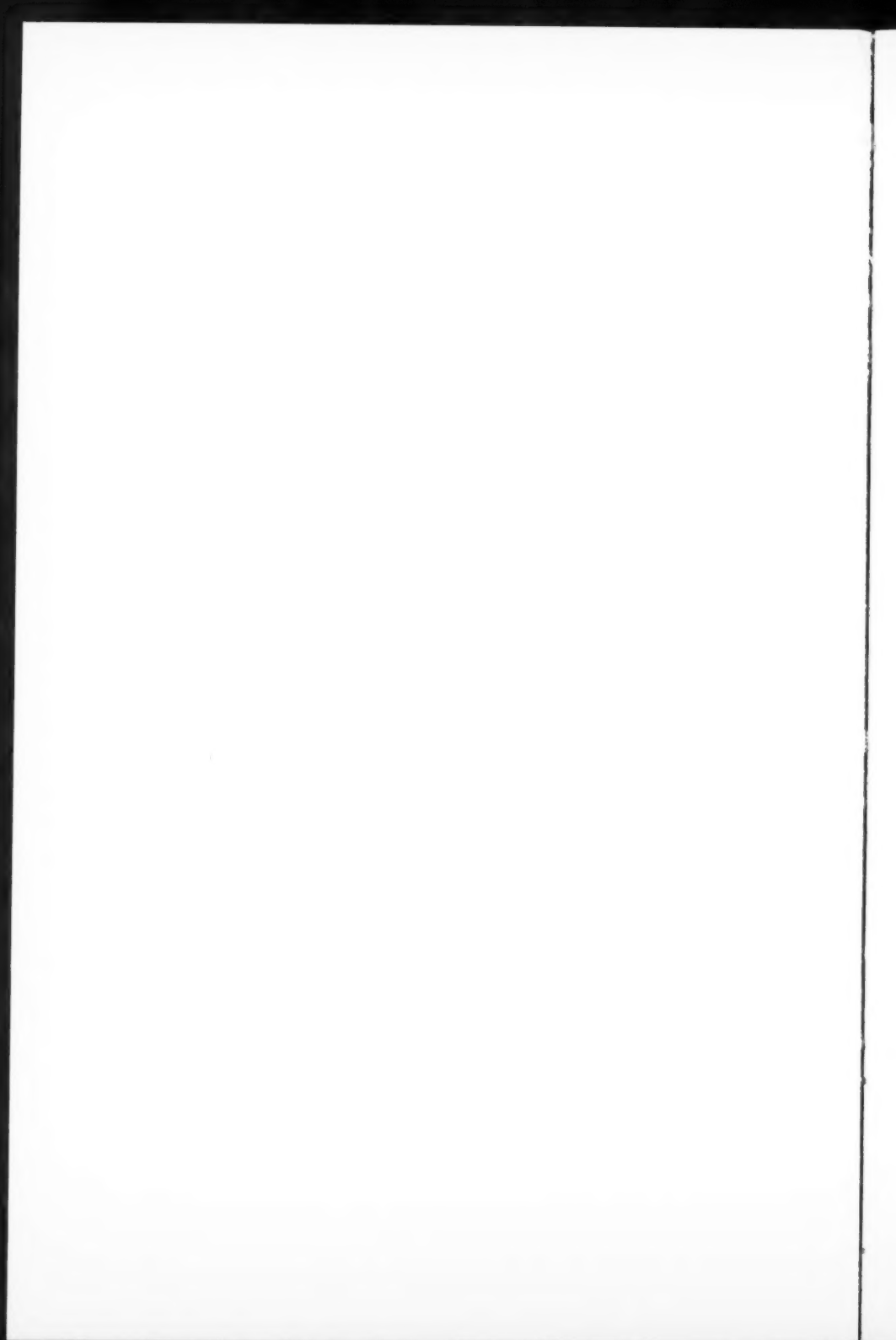
ZENA HUNTER

**Letters from Burma**

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# The Colorado Quarterly

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# The Colorado Quarterly

VOLUME V, NUMBER 3—WINTER, 1957

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## About the authors

In the 1955 and 1956 editions of Best American Short Stories, Martha Foley lists as "distinctive" ten of the seventeen stories published in *The Colorado Quarterly* during 1954 and 1955. Stories in 1954 issues of the *Quarterly* were William Wilson's "A Work of Art" and Roberta Peters' "The Edge of Twilight" (Summer), Robin White's "White Bhagavathar" and Lawrence Spingarn's "The Pond" (Autumn), Donald Berwick's "Peekaboo" and John Graves' "The Laughter from the Western Islands" (Winter), and Harry Muheim's "The Train to Trouble" (Spring). Mr. Spingarn and Mr. White were placed on the Roll of Honor of Authors.

Distinctive stories from 1955 numbers were Helen Rich's "Afternoon of a Troll" (Summer), Willard Marsh's "Last Tag" (Autumn), and Ann Moore's "The Escape" (Winter).

The 1955 volume of Borestone Mountain Poetry Awards reprints seventy-six poems from more than two thousand submitted for the competition by editors of the magazines in which the poems first appeared. Two of the seventy-six prize poems were first published in *The Colorado Quarterly*: Thomas Hornsby Ferril's "Lulled by Withers" (Summer, 1954) and William Stafford's "At the Salt Marsh" (Winter, 1954).

THOMAS HORNSBY FERRIL ("The Challenge of the Pioneer Spirit," p. 229), outstanding poet and essayist of the Rocky Mountain region, has received wide acclaim for his writing. The Library of Congress recorded his reading of fifteen of his poems (1950); he received the Ridgeley Torrence Memorial Award for the best book of poems (1953); the Festival of Arts at Potsdam, New York, invited him to speak at the performance of the Effinger symphony based upon his poem, "Words for Time" (1954), a work which was featured on NBC's "Wide Wide World" telecast from Red Rocks (1956). Four of his poems

appeared in the first number of *The Colorado Quarterly*, Summer (1952), and he was featured in the Special Summer issue (1954). The present article is the text of Mr. Ferril's address at the opening of the Western History Department in the new Denver Public Library building.

COLONEL DANIEL V. MACDONALD ("Air Forces in the Coming Era of Nuclear Balance," p. 244), a graduate of the University of California, was on the Evaluation Staff of the Air War College at Maxwell Field before his present assignment to Walker Air Force Base, New Mexico, as Deputy Commander of the Sixth Bombardment Wing, Heavy, a unit of the Strategic Air Command. He has been a flying instructor at Kelley Field, a pilot of B-17's in the Mediterranean, and the director of B-29 training at Grand Island, Nebraska. In 1948 he joined the operations division of the USAF, and later the joint military advisory group in London and then the Allied Air Forces of Central Europe in Fontainebleau, France. His article was first given as a speech during last year's United Nations Week on the University of Colorado campus.

VI GALE ("The Happy Family," poem, p. 250), a native of Sweden, is now a United States citizen living in Portland, Oregon. She studied writing at Portland State College and Lewis and Clark College and attended the Writers' Conference in the Rocky Mountains in 1955. Her writing has been published in *Pacific Spectator* and *New Orleans Poetry Journal*.

JENKIN LLOYD JONES ("God Bless the Advertisers," p. 251), Editor of the *Tulsa Tribune* for the past sixteen years, last year became President  
(continued on page 335)

## The challenge of the pioneer spirit

THOMAS HORNSBY FERRIL

What are the challenges that face Denver's new Public Library? That question has been explored in various ways these past few days. My subject is "The Challenge of the Pioneer Spirit." I hope I do not disappoint you when I say that to me this simply means many challenges to our own spirit, for spiritually the pioneers were very much like ourselves. We find in them the same beauty, the same ugliness, the same love, the same hatred, the same heroism, the same cowardice, the same wisdom, the same folly that we find in ourselves. The genius of the pioneer for deluding himself was quite commensurate with our own. The pioneer romanticized himself. So do we. One of our most pleasant occupations is to re-romanticize the pioneer into some sort of tribal god through whose mystical bounties we can add to our own stature.

Here we do the pioneer a great disservice, for if we really want the past to enrich our lives we must, first of all, try to understand what the past was. This requires work and effort on our part and only through the library is such understanding possible. We must earn the right to reject the follies of the past by knowing what those follies were, and only in the library can we earn this right. And if we are to enjoy the companionship of the illustrious men of the past, this privilege must be earned in the library.

Nor is it enough to become acquainted with who they were, how they lived and what they thought. We must go further. A challenge is implicit, for we can earn and deserve the companionship of the illustrious men of the past only by asking how they would behave today were it possible for them to have our experience added to their own. You see, it's a cumulative thing. We must have awareness of the increments of continuity. Romantic hero worship has no place in such a process, or should have none, it seems to me, for if we revere some great man of the past and ask ourselves how he would behave in Denver, Colorado, right now in the year 1956, the answers must come from our own minds and

in groping for such answers we must be humble. The library can help us. It can help us a great deal but, after all, wonderful as the instrument is, the library is only an instrument and how we use it, for better or for worse, is the measure of our capacity.

I spoke of earning the companionship of the illustrious men of the past and let me emphasize and re-emphasize the idea of earning. It doesn't come easy, it doesn't come free. Only the library itself is free; and when we consider this freedom to work in the library, this freedom to go wherever the quest leads us, the freedom of the library becomes a beautiful thing to be deeply cherished.

Perhaps you do not agree with me that there is little or no difference between the pioneer spirit and our own. I do not think that the spirit of man changes very much in a hundred years or in many centuries, for that matter. So let's be sure that we are talking about the spirit, not the way of life. Obviously, the pioneer way of life was so vastly different from ours that the contrasts almost stun us with bewilderment.

My father's people were Western pioneers as we use the word. They reached the Missouri River in 1809. Their way of life could have been easily understood by the people of most remote antiquity. Agamemnon, had he stood under those Missouri cottonwoods, would have understood the wagons and the harness hitches perfectly; to Hector or Achilles the ox-yoke would have made good sense. Had Vergil wandered the farm lands, the plows and harrows would have been familiar to him. The management of Missouri livestock would have been commonplace to those herdsmen and shepherds who gave us the Old Testament. The tools in the carpenter shop would have been just about the same tools used by the boy Jesus Christ. I'll not labor the point. It is not necessary to suggest how dismayed and alien the people of antiquity would feel anywhere in modern America. The break in the way of life has been sudden and astonishing. I have great difficulty in trying to reconcile the Denver of today with the Denver of my boyhood. But, I reiterate, it is the way of life that has changed; not the human spirit.

Indeed, these changes are so vast and so complex that they present many challenges to the library as we have known it in the past, an institution primarily built on books which, for so long,

have been our principal recording instruments. In our time we have seen development of other recording instruments of astonishing variety. I need not undertake an inventory of the unprecedented methods—and more coming on every year—by which we now record words, images, sounds, sensations, and all manner of histories of biological and physical phenomena. I do not envy the librarians of the future or those of today, for that matter, in trying to arrive at the proper limitation of their functions. It's a tough one. The congestion of records is staggering, and it's going to get worse in this world of ours that will have 90,000 more people in it by this time tomorrow, and as many more the next day and the next. Our librarians must be as wise as they can, and they must be arbitrary.

Our library is in good hands. The record of decisions has been good under our distinguished librarian emeritus Dr. Malcolm G. Wyer and his predecessors. The challenge will be met with integrity by our new librarian, John Eastlick.

Coming to the immediate business in hand, I had been working out in the sugar beet fields when I received an invitation to say something about the Western History Department in connection with the opening of our new library. The invitation came from Mr. Eastlick, Davis W. Moore, president of the Denver Public Library Commission, and Samuel S. Sherman, also a member of the Commission. I sincerely thanked them for honoring me with this invitation and protested that whatever I might say would have to be grounded in ideas and prejudices I have long held. Speech-making does not come easy to me, nor does writing prose. Working as I do from 8:15 to 5:15 at the Great Western Sugar Company, I prefer to devote what spare time I have to my first love, poetry; yet I feel that some of my experiences in poetry may have some bearing on this discussion.

I'm not sure how far I should go in trying to describe this department. How I wish Dr. Wyer were doing it instead! The Western History Department came into being and was developed under his wise, foresighted, and persevering work; and I should say hind-sighted work also, because, in building up a collection of this kind, a man has to keep second-guessing the past in order to provide well for the future. It requires not only love of the West, its past, its present, its future, but also a certain intuitive feeling

for what is meaningful. You find these same traits in Miss Ina T. Aulls, head of the staff, whose years of devoted work have made such an illustrious contribution to western history and culture. I suppose the good old western word "savvy" comes pretty close to what I mean. For example, one day I asked Miss Aulls how she knew what to clip and file from the newspapers that poured in—some fifty western papers in addition to the files of the Denver dailies. "You just get a feel for it," she replied. This "feel," combined with patience, curiosity, and enthusiasm, characterizes the whole staff. Spend five minutes with Miss Aulls or with Mrs. Alys Freeze, her first assistant, or any of their able associates, and you find it contagious.

So many of you are so thoroughly familiar with how this department works that I'll not go into too much detail. If you lack this familiarity, prowling around. You are always welcome and your queries might even pull some skeleton out of the closet. There is one that I might as well tell you about. It involves literary morality. Our Western History Department had its origin in what I can only call a segregated district. It happened in this way. Over the years a good many books by Colorado authors had accumulated. Whether the reading public regarded these books as a plague or a blessing, I do not know, but the library people felt obliged to put them in a segregated area, or, if you prefer the expression, isolation ward.

By, say, 1920 the West, which is always self-conscious, became self-conscious in a new way. The lingering "fifty-niners" of the Pikes Peak gold rush were now eighty or older. Even among the platoons of those who claimed to be the first white child the competition was tapering off. You had to be over sixty to stay in the running. These old-timers, as they began to slip into oblivion, suddenly became worth snatching back. It's curious how this happens, isn't it? Makers of history, if they outlive the history they made, always strike us as senile and messy. Their garrulity bores the living daylights out of us. But when we begin to miss them we become resentful. It almost amounts to blaming them for their bad manners in dying off before we had time to become interested. "Why didn't they tell us their stories?" we complain to ourselves, forgetting how often we refused to listen when they tried to. So,

along in these roaring 1920's, we began asking the library to put the lost pieces together and the library tried to find them.

By 1920, also, the Indians, the miners, and life generally throughout the West and Southwest were coming into historical focus through new lenses. To Taos and Sante Fe came spiritual exiles from the ivory towers of Paris, London, and New York. They dedicated themselves to helping the Indian find himself which, however generous, was somewhat complicated by the fact that the Indian didn't know he was lost, having lived in that area for some time. Just who was lost the most is beside the point. The point is that a great deal of material had to be found to supply the many writers, historians, painters, and philosophers who were asking new questions about old things. They turned to the library and the library tried to help as best it could.

Meanwhile the serious worker was somewhat at a loss to get the information he wanted. Dr. Wyer recalls how Willa Cather spent two or three weeks in our Denver Library in connection with research on the early history of Colorado and New Mexico in preparation for her novel, *Death Comes for the Archbishop*. She expressed regret that several important books were not in our library nor could she find them in other libraries in Colorado or New Mexico.

Such experiences pointed the need for building up a comprehensive collection of books and source materials relating to the Rocky Mountain region. The state historical societies were gathering what they could with their limited funds but much valuable material was going to eastern libraries and book collectors.

By 1929 Dr. Wyer was able to arouse enough interest in this matter to get a small appropriation of \$2,500 from the city. The late Professor Archer Butler Hulbert of Colorado College was secured as advisor. The soundness of the project resulted in obtaining various grants. The Carnegie Corporation contributed, and by 1934 the collection had increased to such size as to warrant its organization as a separate Western History Department.

It would be beyond the scope of my remarks to undertake any inventory of what this collection contains today. Roughly speaking, it embraces a dozen types of materials: books, pamphlets, periodicals, photographs, prints, original paintings and drawings,



maps, newspapers, documents (federal, state, and city), clippings, and manuscripts.

There are some 42,000 books and pamphlets exclusive of some fifty papers, including archival files of the *Rocky Mountain News* and *Denver Post*. Bound volumes of early Colorado papers are in the collection. Incidentally, it was the pleasure of Mrs. Ferril and myself some years ago to present to the department some of the early bound volumes of our newspaper, *The Rocky Mountain Herald*, founded in 1860 and published today as a legal newspaper. Especially important is the department's collection of some 60,000 photographs and 20,000 negatives.

These pictures have been a fountainhead for historical publications all over the world, and it always gives me a feeling of pride when I open some new book and find our Western History Department credited with supplying the photographs.

How all these materials were secured is a fascinating saga in itself; I could speak at length on how the Eugene Field collection was acquired by Dr. Wyer, or the Remington collection, and equally interesting would be an account of some of the patient and time-consuming quests that led to frustration. Dr. Wyer recounts some of these adventures in a booklet entitled *Western History Collection, Its Beginning and Growth* published by the library in 1950. I commend it to you.

Now, getting back to these challenges we were talking about, there is, it seems to me, one rather broad challenge to all of us who claim to be literate. What is happening to our reading habits?

Were I to ask for a show of hands as to how many of you are now reading some book, I'm sure that the showing would be good, for, by virtue of your being here at all, an interest in books is implied. But possibly you are an exceptional group. Statistically, our reading habits permit a rather dismal picture to be put together. While I question the statistical procedure, it appears that 57 per cent of our high school students and 26 per cent of our college graduates have not read a single book for the past year. This was the finding of the American Institute of Public Opinion which has been surveying American reading habits over the past two decades.

College graduates were asked to name the authors of the follow-



ing books: *An American Tragedy*, *Babbitt*, *The Canterbury Tales*, *Gulliver's Travels*, *Leaves of Grass*, *The Old Wives' Tale*, *Utopia*, *Vanity Fair*, *The Origin of Species*, *The Wealth of Nations*, *The Rubaiyat*, and the *History of Tom Jones*. Nine per cent of these college graduates could not name a single author, while 39 per cent could name no more than three of the authors. That is rather astonishing, isn't it! What's more, at the time of the survey only 17 per cent of the adults in the United States were found to be reading any book at all. I frequently ask some friend: "What books have you been reading lately?" The answers are discouraging. All too frequently comes the reply: "I've just been too busy lately to read a book."

The foregoing statistics may mean something, but they don't worry me. Literacy is increasing. The use of the library is increasing. Human curiosity is increasing. Information that used to come to us through narrow channels now comes from an enormous variety of channels. We are bombarded every hour of the day with words and concepts clamoring for our attention and emotional response. Never before was mortal man subjected to such bombardment. It tends to make us numb, as if we were trying to build up some protective insulation. It also tends to make us receptive rather than creative.

As we watch television or listen to radio, our minds are like sponges or blotting paper; we take it in; it is a form of distraction that means little or nothing to us half an hour later. It is quite different from the creative process of reading words in a book. The words simply trigger the mind; they force the mind to make its own meanings. We remember longer what comes to us from books. Yet it seems to me that we are coming through this bombardment very well. It is a new experience, and I am very certain that we are very wrong when we try to read cultural degradation into the evidence. What it really means is that we have blundered into cultural illumination without precedent, but are temporarily inept in understanding what it's all about or how to use it to our fullest advantage.

At first glance, we might say that the Western History Department is little concerned or only remotely concerned with what I have just been saying about our reading habits amid the general bombardment of ideas to which we are all subjected. The purpose

of this department, as originally conceived, was not to build up a collection for the general reader or for mass circulation. The basic idea was and is to gather a collection for reference and research. This policy is sound.

At the same time—and we are still talking about challenges—what influences will or should the department exert on the research people and the authors who write the books for the general reader and for mass circulation? How can the collection be instrumental in helping the West understand itself better? I have some very strong feelings on this subject for it makes me unhappy to be told that the greatest number of inquiries received by the department are for information about Buffalo Bill and Baby Doe Tabor. Not that I have anything against Cody or the Tabors, but what measure is this of our own measure of the West? Does this satisfy you? It does not please me. It confirms again what I alluded to in my opening remarks—our chronic and long-standing compulsion to romanticize and re-romanticize western experience.

This department has been helpful to many western authors. It is destined to generate many books in the future. What has been their quality? What is likely to be their quality? The department keeps a record of those books. Not long ago I went over the list shown to me by Ina Aulls, Alys Freeze and Opal Harber. Perhaps I am too critical; perhaps, because of my own inadequacies, there is in me too much of the hankering of the perfectionist. But these books, for the greater part, fell short of our western potentials, it seemed to me, especially in the field of idealistic writing, by which I mean the use of ideas to interpret western experience. Of the better books I felt that a few might hold their own for a while in the eddies of the mainstream of American literature.

But why not the mainstream itself? Let's be proud and severe! I would like to see great books coming out of this magnificent West of ours, books that time could not hurt, books that would beckon to future generations and illuminate them. You, I am sure, share these views. We know what came out of the flowering of New England, what came out of the Middle West and the Mississippi River; we are aware of the rise of literature in the South; we read where the Pulitzer prizes go and where the Nobel prizes go—not that prizes mean too much, for literary politics is often in-

volved—yet our record, it seems to me, is disappointing. As a perfectionist, and I hope I am one, I would like to see the West give the world from time to time, not the book of the month, not the book of the year, but the book that belongs to the great tradition, anywhere any time.

What are the prospects? They are unpredictable. The prospect depends entirely on the incidence of genius. Where or when, nobody knows. It can happen on the banks of some trickling rivulet in Greece, on the banks of the Tiber in Rome, on the banks of the Avon in England. It could happen on Bear Creek or Turkey Creek or the Picketwire. Nobody knows about genius, where or when.

But what are the impediments? Why is the West slow in measuring up to the great tradition? Why, with such enormous literary output, does Western writing tend to be ephemeral, aiming so often at mass popularity, reaching multitudes quickly and forgotten by multitudes quickly? Fortunes have been made by Western literary craftsmen—and I respect the craftsman who writes for money—but I respect also the writing of enduring illumination. What, I repeat, are the impediments?

I have thought a long time about this and I believe that what I am about to tell you is true. I believe that it goes somewhat beyond literary behavior and has implications in our economic and social mores which might be helpful to us in trying to give form and dimension to the kind of life we would like to lead in the West. The premise is very simple, so simple that it has long been overlooked. It merely has to do with our response to our own environment. It has to do with the difference between how our environment looks and what it really is. It has to do with the eternal lure of landscape at war with the eternal reality of Nature.

I want to be certain that you understand what I'm talking about because I feel it to be rather important. It is our good fortune, thank God, to be living in the most beautiful country in the world. These mountains, this great blue bow of mountains, sweeping from Yucatan to Arctic roses, have given to us in Colorado their most ecstatic manifestations. These manifestations assume two forms, the apparent and the real. Apparent Nature, or how the wonderful country looks, is landscape as I use the word, while real Nature breaks down into its physical composition, its elements,

minerals, soils, its water or lack of water, its ecological balances and everything we imply by the concept, natural resources.

The ancient platitude that appearances are deceiving is applicable to what I am saying. For generations, Easterners and we Westerners ourselves have underestimated the magic lure of apparent Nature, or landscape; we have not understood how it affects our minds and emotions and how it beguiles us into delayed recognition of the realities of Nature which often deal us very savage blows.

For one aspect of this thing, let's construct a simple example of what we might call the pastoral illusion. It's a lovely October day. The outdoors beckons to us. We drive through tranquil farming country with majestic Rockies in the background. The trees explode with glorious color. We see the herds and the flocks in pasture. Apparent Nature, or the appearance of things, keeps whispering to us: "How beautiful this is! This is God's Country! Here a man can live a full life! Here in the presence of these mountains can children grow up to be strong men." But under the magic spell, the truth is withheld. Real Nature is not speaking. No voice is saying: "What do you know about the ditch rights? What do you know about the shrinking water table? What do you know about nitrogen and phosphorus? About root maggots? Nematodes? Pigweed, red-root, bindweed? What do you know about the cattle market or the diseases of sheep?" No voice is saying: "God's Country, yes, but unless you know how it works, you might be better off in Brooklyn!"

Now, with respect to creative writing, the spell of apparent Nature has always held the whip-hand in the West. The vast landscape has demanded direct answers and the romantic mind has supplied them. The omnipotent mountains and deserts keep telling the mind: "We are all-powerful. You are a weakling. Only a superman can cope with us!" So the writer, oblivious to the histories of natural men, obligingly creates the superman to match the appearance of the mountain. The superman is a caricature imposed on the pioneer legend—a caricature that has nothing in common with those pioneer people, much like ourselves, who blundered into the West seeking by trial and error something better than they'd left behind. Indeed, the true stories of so many of our early people—people who met real Nature on its own

terms—have been rewritten and distorted to satisfy the exaggerated notions of what life must have been like instead of what it was.

Moreover, when you abandon the play for the setting—and the history of literature makes it clear that this is an unforgivable error—when, I repeat, you let the setting dictate the story, it is axiomatic that character degenerates to type. The superman, created as an answer to overpowering landscape, becomes a fixed type; his pattern is fixed and inflexible. He behaves ritualistically and demands ritualistic behavior in others. Everybody must be typed categorically: we must have the typical villain, the typical dancehall girl, the typical preacher, the typical sheriff, and all the ridiculous stereotyped creatures who must play typical Cowboy-and-Indian and typical Cops-and-Robbers against the typical backdrop of typical landscape.

The ritual is tight as a drum. It becomes rigidly conventionalized. It permits no encroachment by the infinite varieties of frailty which, under the press of circumstance imposed by actual Nature and actual men, make for the glories of literature. Slowly, I'm happy to say, we are breaking the barrier, and I could cite a few strong authors who are doing it, but it comes slow. The pressures to comply with the code are exacting. When a famous western author, a man dear to many of you personally and to me, tried to break the code by writing with integrity, his publishers were dismayed. He had to write the book under an assumed name.

I could give you many examples of how capitulation to scenery works. Hamlin Garland wrote beautifully on the prairie, wretchedly in the Colorado Rockies, and beautifully on the prairie again. Walt Whitman behaved in similar fashion, strong on the prairie, weak in Colorado, and strong on the prairie again. As we all know, and have known from antiquity, literature depends on the agonies and ecstasies of men, the desires, the memories, the transitoriness and the inevitabilities of men. The stage setting is irrelevant. The greatest tragedies require no scenery, nor are they ever dictated by it. John Keats was absolutely right when he wrote: "Scenery is fine but human nature is finer—the sward is richer for the tread of a nervous English foot." Walt Whitman was absolutely wrong when he wrote:

Talk as you like, a typical Rocky Mountain canyon, or limitless sea-like stretch of the great Colorado plains, under favoring circumstances, tallies, perhaps expresses, certainly awakes, those grandest and subtlest emotions of the human soul, that all marble temples and sculptures from Phideas to Thorwaldsen—all paintings, poems, reminiscences or even music—probably never can.

The quotation from Whitman is quite interesting. Keep it in mind if you ever want to do a little research on how long it would take to fill the Grand Canyon with all the bad poetry that has been written about it, and why a good poem on the Grand Canyon has never been written, and why the best English poets invariably wrote their worst poetry in Switzerland.

When we say that over-powering mountains, canyons, and deserts are inspiring we are telling the truth, but we must never confuse this inspiration with the inspiration that produces literature. They are entirely different. Magnificent scenery makes you inarticulate, it makes you gag up. It makes you write postcards home—and millions of postcards go out of Colorado every summer saying precisely the same thing: "No words can describe what I saw today!" This is normal. Surfeited with beauty, you choke up. Lacking beauty, you create it by way of compensation. This explains why writers of the monotonous Corn Belt have spoken more eloquently than the writers of the Rockies. This explains also why so many beautiful poems over the centuries have been written in prison.

To be aware of these workings of the mind increases our love for the West. I would rather try to write in the West than anywhere else because the natural impediments, once you sense their nature, lead to control and discipline. And I would suggest that it might be very helpful to our civic leaders, our businessmen, our chambers of commerce, to study the erratic behavior of the literary mind as something symptomatic of their own yearnings, for the same influences are impinging on all of us.

At the moment, the world is in the midst of a population boom that is not well understood. Some of the British scientists refer to it as a "flood of life" or "breeding storm," similar to what happens on occasion to various plants and animals. Human congestion is increasing; in some areas it amounts to a form of malignancy. It is natural, under these conditions, that our wonderful



West should become peculiarly attractive to everybody everywhere. The old lure of apparent Nature, the lure of landscape, the lure of the magic idea of the "wide open spaces" is very powerful. It makes people want to come our way. Let's be generous, let's be hospitable, but let's not succumb to economic romanticism, and let us not forget that Nature will always have the last word. So let's be a bit choosy. Let's be profit-minded, if you will, for if, enchanted by short-range illusion we violate long-range inevitabilities; if we frantically overload our limited resources, particularly water, with too many people and too many industries, we shall have lost much that once made our land so lovely. Los Angeles once was a pretty place. Remember?

In conclusion, may we all wish this Western History Department good wayfaring in helping to give the West access to its own comprehension. Let every man learn to define his own West in his own way. The very idea of moving in a westerly direction has long enchanted men. We find love of westerling in the ancient writings of Seneca and Strabo in the days of Augustus, we find it in the Arthurian legends, in the writings of Berkeley, Thoreau, and John Adams. "Eastward," said Thoreau, "I go only by force, but westward I go free." Where our West begins or may end I have no idea. There are many ways of measuring. Tree rings can tell us when Mesa Verde began drowsing off into its long sleep, or we can say that it must have been about the year when Dante was falling in love with Beatrice.

For my part, whether it be Dante and Beatrice or someone else, I enjoy thinking of the kinship of our own West with other people in other times. I have often written about it. Recently I was pleased when one of America's great scientific foundations asked to use these lines from *New & Selected Poems* in its annual report:

#### WHO ARE THE COUSINS?

Who are the cousins the mind makes?  
How does a sand lily in a vacant lot  
Give you the rose-glow towers, the miniver princes?  
How can a cottonwood in the dusty rain  
Give you the tap of a sandal in Argolis?

What attracted Dr. Vannevar Bush to that poem, I do not know, but I have always felt that our own culture is given context and

meaning by the cousins the mind makes. I remember writing a poem about what might have been going on one evening in Europe in the year 1605 when Juan de Onate, at noon, was coming up the arroyos of New Mexico. Cervantes was sending Don Quixote on his long quest and Shakespeare was writing *King Lear*. Part of the poem (*New & Selected Poems*) is addressed to a coyote:

Be still, Coyote in the noon,  
You cannot see the sinking of the star  
Into the burnt slit of the Rio Grande,  
At noon, Coyote, stars are frail as pollen,  
But Lope de Vega's gone to bed,  
Philip the Third has gone to bed,  
And the child Velasquez sucks his thumb  
In the blackness of Madrid,  
But Will Shakespeare hasn't gone to bed  
And over England lightning flashes,  
Soft, Coyote, Lear is mumbling  
Into the northern wind.

It's a long way from those deep Old Wests to the shimmering New Wests of tomorrow that dazzle our vision as mystically as did the Seven Cities of Cibola the Spaniards of old. The other evening I was talking to the young executive of a large plant that will manufacture, on the very site where I used to hunt prairie dogs with my .22, incredible missiles that will go incredible distances. He spoke of what we used to call the laws of gravitation as if he were speaking of a covered wagon. He spoke of empirical logic as if he were speaking of Rip Van Winkle.

It is exciting to be where we are; it is exciting to be talking about the pioneer spirit, for we ourselves are the pioneers; it is our spirit which, for better or for worse, and I think better, will give some shape to the long tomorrows. I'll close, not by answering but by asking questions. I'll read one of the introductory passages from a long unpublished poem now nearing completion:

Tell me, beyond what ranges of the reasonable will  
Does faring of a city quest?

I ask you this in Denver, Colorado,  
Lip of the bulldozer against the skull  
Churning the dead to furrows of new exile



Numb as the pistons when the Diesels cool  
And the steel crane nods  
A dragline sag  
Down the sandpit pools of evening.

I near remember how it used to be  
The very morning of this very day:  
These pools of sandpit water were not here.  
In lieu, there chalked a high and yellow bluff  
Yucca-dry as the spiney blink of a horned-toad;  
The bluff sheered back ten cottonwood shadows from  
The bake of the raw-hide shrink of the river bed;  
Gophers, cactus, chattering cater-cousin,  
Larks on liquid spindles of the morning,  
Strawberry runners of the buffalo grass  
Clamping the powdered herd songs of far cattle,  
Every root in place and trembling nothing  
But a wisp of dusty whirlwind spiralling off  
Like a girl-child losing a tune she almost danced to.

How came these waters deep so suddenly?  
How was the great bluff moiled, unsocketed  
And cast against the skyline of the sky,  
Oracular mortar webbed of steel and dripping  
To stiffen on the trestles of the westwind  
Over the porticos of eagles,  
The lintels of lightning?

## Air forces in the coming era of nuclear balance

COLONEL DANIEL V. MACDONALD

One of the most difficult problems the Evaluation Staff of the Air War College must study is what will happen when the Soviet Union and the United States achieve nuclear balance, that is to say, when we and the Soviets discover that we have enough weapons to annihilate each other in a nuclear war.

During the last two years, many of the guest lecturers at the Air War College have expressed considerable anxiety about the rapidly approaching period when the Soviets would have nuclear plenty or what I call nuclear balance, and the United States would have lost its decisive strategic advantage over Russia. It was evident that too many of the speakers looked upon the approaching stalemate as catastrophic and were afraid that a settlement on Soviet terms would probably be our only recourse. These analysts were, in effect, carrying their thinking up to but not into the coming era of nuclear balance; they were stopping short of the area of the major problem. Therefore, the Evaluation Staff of the Air War College, which has as one of its responsibilities the search for more effective uses for our air power, set about studying this problem of nuclear balance. Here is a general summation of some of the ideas and attitudes developed by this attempt to peer into the future.

In the first place, two very important considerations should be kept in mind while analyzing this anticipated nuclear balance. One, it will be a relatively normal rather than abnormal situation. Seldom in history has a major power been free, as the United States has been since 1945, to resort to all-out war without fear of retaliation in kind. Now we are coming to a situation of balanced military power. This may not be as desirable as what we have had in the past, but nations *have* lived with it before.

The second consideration is that whereas this freedom of choice has allowed us to use our nuclear superiority as a general deterrent

to practically all types of communist aggression in the past, we will have to discover and use a wide range of deterrents in the future.

Granting these preliminary considerations, let us now examine three assumptions, which will be basic to my argument. The first assumption is one held by an increasingly large number of people. It is that an all-out nuclear war between the United States and Soviet Russia is becoming less likely as nuclear balance approaches. Of course, an all-out nuclear battle is always a possibility through miscalculation or desperation or lunacy on one side or the other. Furthermore, the economic and technological effort required to maintain a balance must not be minimized. But by and large, total war is probably becoming less likely.

The second assumption, a corollary of the first, is that as nuclear balance approaches the Soviets will be forced to pursue their expansionist plans by means short of total war: economic and political warfare, subversion, and, if necessary, "limited" wars. Present trends in world affairs, such as the struggle for control of the Middle East, validate this assumption.

My third assumption is that the value of our nuclear air potentialities as a deterrent to communist expansion by means short of war may be less than it was when we enjoyed nuclear superiority.

Now if there is some validity in these three assumptions, they point in turn to three major tasks or objectives for the Air Force. In the first place the Air Force must continue to maintain a first-class strategic air command continually able to accomplish its mission. This will be the primary deterrent to any Soviet inclination to resort to total war. In fact, it is the primary United States ingredient in the nuclear balance. Related to this task is the air defense of North America. We must do a first-class job there too.

Secondly, the Air Force is going to have to maintain a wide range of nuclear and non-nuclear capabilities for deterring, or if necessary, fighting in limited wars. This involves joint operations with the Army and Navy. I include in these first two tasks the meeting of our treaty commitments.

Thirdly, and this is the area in which I am primarily interested, the Air Force must maintain, understand, and apply the capabilities it has for support of operations of our government in a wide range of situations in which no shot will be fired and no bomb

will be dropped. We must integrate all our national elements of strength and effectively bring them to bear on the problems that confront us. I believe this means that we military people must not be in the position of only waiting for periodic calls to pull our chestnuts out of the fire. On the contrary, we must also be in a position to suggest how our capabilities can be usefully employed in coordination with other elements of national power in a wide variety of situations not involving armed conflict. We must help keep the chestnuts from getting into the fire in the first place.

I don't mean to imply by this line of reasoning that the military should be the dominant consideration in our foreign policy: on the contrary our armed forces must always be the servant of foreign policy. But their capabilities to support foreign policy must be fully understood and utilized.

There is ample evidence today that communist tactics are flexible and that the Soviets are boldly and effectively using every capability in their bag of tricks to achieve the political and psychological victories they seek on their road to world domination. They will probably not be less clever or less bold as they catch up with us in nuclear capabilities. On the contrary, their present tactics are probably one manifestation of the fact that they are catching up with us.

Now what can we airmen suggest? What are our air capabilities? I remember reading a study once which said: "What the Air Force *is*, what it *does*, and what it *says*, all have political consequences abroad and at home, whether intended or not." What it *is*, what it *says*, what it *does*. This thought can be related to the Air Force bible, our Air Force Manual on basic doctrine, which says that there are active and passive uses of air forces. What we *do*, then, is an active use of air forces, and what we *are* and what we *say* are passive uses of air forces.

Let's examine the active side further. We could think of these active capabilities as a spectrum, at one end of which might be "Deliver hydrogen bombs" and at the other end "Train personnel of Allied Air Forces." In between these two extremes we could place intermediate capabilities such as various kinds of shows of force, from powerful ones such as deployment of B-52's to a very well-timed and subtle unveiling of a new aircraft. The Soviets gave us a good taste of the latter recently when they sent some

of their new jet transports to London. Such planes create quite a stir—political, psychological, and technological.

Further down the scale of capabilities we could place airlift. This means of shrinking the globe is just now coming into its own with the development of such aircraft as the Boeing jet transport and the new Douglas C-133, a turbo-prop transport. The variety of cargo these planes can carry, the speed with which they can move it to any point on the globe, and their consequent political usefulness stir the imagination.

Now for passive capabilities. These are the more subtle ones which are going to be increasingly important in the age of nuclear balance. First, we have Air Forces in being. These are the same forces I have been discussing as active capabilities. But we do not always have to conduct some operation with them in order to accomplish a political objective. As I said earlier, what the Air Force *is* and what it *says*, or what is said about it, have political consequences as well as what it *does*. As one example of the political impact of Air Forces in-being, the Strategic Air Command, by posing the only direct threat to the Soviet heartland for the last ten years, has by its mere existence been the primary deterrent to Soviet resort to war. Conversely, as General Grunther has so often pointed out, Strategic Air Command backing of NATO has provided one of the most significant incentives to the NATO nations to hold the alliance together. By existing, it is at once a deterrent and an incentive. Another example is our Sabre jets, which are evidence of the licking we gave the communist air forces in Korea. By existing, they are a constant consideration in the Kremlin deliberations.

Now for the second category of passive capabilities—what we *say* about Air Forces. This is related to the whole spectrum of active capabilities; but it is also related to a host of other aspects of air power, such as research and development programs, appropriations, new weapons, even the enunciation of new concepts for the use of air power. In a sense I suppose what we say about these things is political and psychological warfare; but I would just suggest that it is nevertheless based on air power. Saying the right thing about an appropriate aspect of air power at the right time and place can create significant impacts, and I need only cite President Eisenhower's dramatic proposal for mutual aerial reconnais-

sance as evidence of this fact, the impact of which was political, psychological, and world-wide.

In our studies of nuclear balance at the Air War College we have attempted to devise a realistic test of the usefulness of our spectrum of air capabilities by developing a corresponding conflict situation spectrum. Along this spectrum we placed some eleven categories of conflict situations arranged in order of severity from peace and stability to all-out war and instability. Each category was further subdivided into four or five types of conflict. In this way we had a means of applying a graduated scale of capabilities to a graduated scale of conflict, thereby enabling us to test the soundness of our theories and to arrive at new concepts of the use of air power in non-combat roles.

There are numerous examples in recent history of how our Air Forces have been used in particular situations to achieve political and psychological ends without the use of firepower: the Berlin airlift, the airlift of pilgrims to Mecca, disaster relief via air during the Pakistan floods in the summer of 1954, and the distribution of relief supplies by airlift during the severe winter of 1956 in Europe. Another recent example which I cited earlier was the President's mutual aerial reconnaissance proposal. The air capabilities behind this proposal, of course, were not airlift, but rather the full aerial reconnaissance capabilities of the Strategic and Tactical Air Commands.

So much for history. Now what could we do in the future in a situation of nuclear balance? How could we use air power to eliminate the Iron Curtain which separates the communist world from the free world. I believe that this is a long-term objective of the United States and of the rest of the free world even if it is not at all times an action policy. The elements of the Iron Curtain are political, military, psychological, sociological, and economic. We could not, of course, hope to attack these solely with air power. All of our own corresponding national capabilities must be involved.

One type of action would involve exploiting every opportunity that arises to propose some operation which would penetrate the Iron Curtain. Each time the Soviet government denied such proposed operations, the responsibility for the existence of the Curtain would be placed on the Soviets by the peoples of the world.

We win a political victory either way. Opportunities which could be exploited are such things as disasters behind the Iron Curtain and various other situations where for humanitarian purposes we could offer to airlift immediate relief to affected areas. This would put the bee squarely on the Soviet's back—to open the Iron Curtain or to leave it shut in the face of dire humanitarian need.

Another type of action could be designed to show the futility of the Iron Curtain. These actions would be based on technological progress in the development of new air vehicles. For instance, we have seen that balloons have created a small chink in the Curtain. They have been used for propaganda and research purposes. We will soon see a satellite which has the capability of penetrating the Curtain. In years to come, and I am talking now of a period of ten to twenty years away, numerous air vehicles are going to have a difficult time respecting national sovereignty over air space. In fact, this will eventually require, in my opinion, some new concepts of international law. Ironically, these new aerial vehicles will be developed by the Soviets too, and we are going to face the same problem of national sovereignty over our air space.

Here are some other actions we could use which would embarrass the Soviet Union about the Iron Curtain. Some of these, I believe, are already under way or are at least being achieved as by-products of other efforts. For instance, we can continue to press the aerial inspection issue in any future disarmament discussions. Then since the Soviet Union has never gone very far with reciprocal commercial air rights, I believe we should express the wish to have aircraft going back and forth through the Iron Curtain as often as possible. The Soviets also have never joined ICAO, the International Civil Air Organization. Why not raise this issue at every opportunity along with the other mentioned?

In the future we might offer to provide airlift for visitors from Russia to the United States to see our way of life. The airlift would get the people to their ultimate destination quickly, minimize dislocation in jobs and so forth and, as I have indicated, the new transports being developed will permit such undertakings at quite low costs.

We should also propose reciprocal exchanges of personnel between the United States and Soviet Air Forces. This may sound startling, but I fail to see what we have to lose. Surely every Rus-



sian who gets a look at the inside of the United States has doubts raised in his mind about the propaganda he has had dinned into him from the day he was born, and I believe we need have no fear of the impact on our people of the exposure to the Soviet way of life.

Finally, why not propose exchange of exhibits between the United States and the USSR depicting the ways of life of the two nations? Those transports I mentioned could carry large cargoes from the U. S. to Russia. They could move around within Russia without depending on limited Soviet transportation resources. They would have their own mobility and flexibility. Here again I fail to see that we have anything to fear in seeing their way of life. On the contrary, I think the Soviets have a great deal to fear from seeing ours. For this reason they may not go along with this idea. But if it could get started on a limited basis, our objective might ultimately be accomplished, and if it did not get started at all, whose fault would it be?

In closing, I would like to emphasize that U. S. air power, and I include civilian as well as military in that term, has a tremendous and yet unrealized potential for assisting the U. S. in accomplishing our political and psychological objectives. I would also suggest that various elements of air power can do this as part of their normal role of supporting U. S. foreign policy and in such a way that the true meaning of the slogan "Air power is peace power" is demonstrated all over the world.

### THE HAPPY FAMILY

(From the 19th century Swedish of Josef Wecksell)

By VI GALE

The eldest son called mother sweet,  
The second, lazy, worked the street,  
The third died for his faithless love—  
The fourth took her to turtledove,  
Then five was thrown in jail for debt.  
Young six wrote verse to the gazette  
And father, anguished, smote his brow:  
"The worst, the worst, it's on us now!"



## God bless the advertisers

JENKIN LLOYD JONES

I want to talk about the Press. More particularly, I want to talk about the frankly commercial press—the press in business to make a profit, the press that is sustained with revenue from paying subscribers and paying advertisers—and nothing else. I am part of that press and I am very proud of it. We are in business only because a lot of people want to read what our columns have to tell. And because we have these readers a lot of people who have things to sell want to buy space next to those columns in order to hawk their goods.

I also want to talk about the freedom of the press. But this time I'm not going to exhume the hallowed bones of Peter Zenger. I'm not going to quote from Milton's *Areopagitica*, or call up the ghost of Elijah Lovejoy or any other martyrs who were imprisoned or murdered for trying to put into print the truth as they saw it. Instead I want to throw my hat in the air for the hucksters who sell the ads and for the tycoons who buy them. Their role in the development of a free and courageous press is, I think, imperfectly understood. They may be nobler than they think.

We have many philosophers, politicians, and teachers in this country who sneer at the hucksters and vilify the commercial press. They have the impression that there is something crass and immoral about trying to take in more than you spend, and they suffer from the delusion that much of the foreign press, because it shows its ribs and lives in the shadow of starvation, must be a noble and dedicated thing.

Of course, the wealthiest press is not always the best. We have our share of fat-cat newspapers in America, snoring on mattresses stuffed with bonds while the boys roll up the tin roof on the courthouse and slide the safe out of the city hall. We have monopoly situations in which the editor speaks for none but the country club crowd. We have had, and in rare cases still have, local press barons who try to impose their views on their readers without re-

gard to fair news treatment or objective reporting. Every woodlot has its skunk. As a general rule, however, the newspapers in the world that are most responsible and worthy of trust are those newspapers that are solvent. The penniless newspaper, like the penniless young lady, is more susceptible to an immoral proposition than one well-heeled.

I do not belong to that school of editors which feels that the advertising department and the business office are beneath our notice. If I am able to holler about the rates of our power company or criticize a civic proposal advanced by our leading department store advertiser, I can do so because our advertising and business offices have done their work well. They have done their work well when our newspaper is not dependent on the patronage of any single man or susceptible to the domination of any group. A newspaper may have many purposes for being, but its No. 1 motivation is survival. And the newspaper that is barely surviving is the newspaper that is least able to tell a straightforward, unbiased story.

You remember a noble experiment in New York a few years ago called *PM*. It was going to be free—so free that it would not be sullied by paid advertising. So *PM* got underway—modestly at first, and then with increasing modesty. As it fell deeper into circulation troubles it concluded that perhaps the minority groups of New York would be its salvation; so it began to champion all kinds of things it thought minority groups would be interested in. This championing became an obsession. Soon *PM* ceased to reflect the normal run of news altogether. It became unable to see anything except job discrimination, intolerance, rent hogs, food adulterations, etc. Toward its final days, when it belatedly opened its columns for what it optimistically called “selected” advertising, *PM* had ceased to be a newspaper and had become a pamphlet. And this, you remember, was the press that was going to be “free.”

I believe that America’s “commercial” newspapers today, in general, are the most accurate, the most informative, the most reliable newspapers in the world. With spruce trees to the north of us and pine trees to the south, we have also, of course, the fattest newspapers in the world. They carry columns enough not only to print fulsome news reports and forthright editorial fulminations, but also to regale readers with comics, jokes, puzzles, advice

to the lovelorn, household hints, racing tips, recipes, and the progress of Princess Grace's pregnancy.

This is not to say that there are no foreign editors who could teach us things. I know of no American newspaper which can top Tokyo's *Asahi* and *Mainichi* for promotional vigor and enterprise. We don't have a *Neue Zürcher Zeitung*, whose stockholders take only \$10,000 in dividends each year and plough the rest of the large profits back into more and finer foreign correspondence. In terms of literary ability most British reporters can write circles around our own.

But, generally speaking, the foreign press is a catchpenny press. The multiplicity of foreign newspapers is the first and most obvious difficulty. Karachi has nine dailies, Athens twelve, and when, on a trip around the world last fall, I asked a Thai editor about the daily newspaper population in Bangkok he counted on his fingers for a while and said that he guessed there were between eighteen and twenty-two.

A year ago I walked up three flights of stairs in a miserable little office building in Athens to interview the editor of one of the leading Athenian afternoon papers. The newsroom looked like the common office of three impoverished horse handicappers. A spavined tubular press ground away in the next room. And the editor's sanctum included a roll-top desk, a puppy-chewed chair, and a typewriter of the late Oliver age.

The editor told me he was quite desperate. A week before he had caught the town's leading dairy lacing its Grade-A milk with pure city water and whitening. He wrote the story. Alas, not only did he lose the dairy's advertising, which was to be expected, but the dairy owner turned out to be godfather or close cousin to many of his chief accounts. All of them had deserted him and gone to competitors up and down the streets. Where there are many newspapers and where no newspaper is much more than barely making yardage through the deep sand, it is easy for advertisers to throw their weight around. If my Athenian friend survives it will be a long time before he holds a milk bottle to the light again.

Too many newspapers, like too many stray dogs in the street of a slum, root desperately in the garbage cans. They gyrate between jealous hatred and fawning gratitude. Some are the creatures of

political parties. Some are the kept ladies of special-interest pressure groups. They are victims of a vicious circle. Their poverty drives them to seek subsidy. Subsidy destroys their objectivity. Their lack of objectivity causes rival interests to set up or buy into other mouthpieces. And the multiplicity of mouthpieces keeps them all poor so that none can shake loose from subsidy.

Dr. Robert Maynard Hutchins, who recently has been busy explaining what the Fund for the Republic is up to, some years ago set himself up as an expert on the American press while he was President of the University of Chicago. Doctor Hutchins pointed with alarm to the diminished number of daily newspapers in America. He saw with foreboding the rise in both size and number of those cities in which one owner controlled all the newspapers. He envisioned a dismal day in which America would be at the mercy of a handful of power-drunk publishers, and he talked wistfully of possible subsidies that would enable a large number of opposition newspapers to survive.

Doctor Hutchins, unfortunately, flunked his American history. The American press in the days when every street was lined with gaunt editors picking at battered type racks was the most irresponsible press and the least informative press we ever had. The yellowed files tell the story. For every Greeley, Grady, and Watterson, who were men of genuine genius, there were thousands of ink-stained wretches printing partisan balderdash as though they had messages from Sinai, speaking favorably of cancer salves and electric belts, seeking circulation by the most grotesque hoaxes, and treating each other in quarrelsome editorials with the contempt that they all deserved. It is simply not true that there were giants in the earth in those days.

In the year 1900 there were 2,200 daily newspapers in the United States, and they had a combined circulation of 15 million. Last year there were only 1,760 daily newspapers, but they had combined circulations of more than 56 million. While the population of our country increased 100 per cent, daily newspaper circulation went up 415 per cent. Some of this was due to a more general prosperity. Some of it came about because city newspapers circulate over wider territories. Some of it was due to an almost complete washout of illiteracy. But at least part of it was due to an increase in public confidence in the product.

Sir Thomas Gresham, founder of the Royal Exchange in London, invented Gresham's law of currency. Gresham's law held that bad money tends to drive out good. This is an unhappy truth. But where the press is free over a period of years to develop its full capabilities if it can, there comes into being what might be called a reverse Gresham's law. That is, good news handling tends to drive out of business inept, inaccurate, or dull news handling.

Mr. Nehru and his advisers, unhappily, seem to be trying to halt this process of natural selection and survival of the fittest. They seem to be less impressed by the record than by Dr. Hutchins' theories. The new press law of India is designed to discourage strong newspapers and to bottle-feed the weak. It provides, for example, that no newspaper may carry more than 40 per cent advertising. It provides that large newspapers must charge more per copy than small newspapers, thus artificially limiting their readers to the more prosperous. About 20 per cent of all advertising in India is government-controlled advertising and the new law would funnel to the weak papers a disproportionate share of this government ad copy.

I think I know what is going to happen. India's press, which is pretty wild and chaotic, is going to stay wild and chaotic. Where newspapers are penalized by law for being successful and are nurtured and subsidized by law for being unsuccessful, there will be less incentive to do a good, sound, solid job of telling the reader what is going on in his city, his country, and the world around him.

Some people wonder if the press that depends on advertising is any freer than the press that solicits subsidy. Consider the poor Greek editor, again. Aren't American newspapers, too, at the mercy of self-seeking advertisers who use their economic power to control editorial policies?

The answer is, with rare exceptions, no. And for two reasons. The first is that the ability of a single advertiser to influence the press diminishes in direct ratio to the volume of advertising from all advertisers and to the financial health of the press. Obviously the leverage of an account that could spell the difference between a paper's survival or failure is vastly different from the leverage of an account which the newspaper would hardly miss.

Secondly, where there is a large volume of advertising, adver-

tisers themselves have widely divergent interests. The most fawning editorial writer could not please them all. An editorial that will delight United Airlines or Pacific Intermountain Express is bound to make the Union Pacific or the New York Central mad. No health column is going to satisfy both Hershey's chocolates and Slenderella. In spite of the fact that one of the most important sources of national advertising is the cigaret accounts, it is through the daily press that the public has learned about the researches into the causes of lung cancer. The tobacco companies are naturally unhappy about these suspicions. But I have yet to hear of a single case where they tried to suppress the news.

The picture of powerful advertisers crowding around an editor's desk, telling him what to put in the paper, what to throw out, what to comment on and how is a vision beloved of socialist theoreticians, disappointed candidates, and befuddled college professors. We editors, of course, like to give ourselves credit for a little guts. But it is also the self-interest of the advertiser that makes this picture unlikely.

To enjoy a wide audience a newspaper must inspire confidence among its readers. No man, given a choice, takes a paper he regards as unreliable. The advertiser wants the audience. The newspaper to which he could successfully dictate is not a newspaper that in any kind of a competitive field would hold its audience.

Let's consider, on the other hand, the influence of subsidy. American newspapers, if they have any viscera at all, make a choice between political parties before a major election. But because the *Chicago Daily News*, which leans Republican, needs no subsidy from the Republican Party, it uncovered the Hodge scandal in Illinois last summer that rocked the state Republican organization. And because the *Chicago Sun-Times*, which leans Democratic, needs no subsidy from the Democrats, it lifted the garbage can lid from a political slush fund that caused the Democratic candidate for governor to withdraw.

Where can you find a parallel performance in the so-called "non-commercial" press? What labor newspaper blows the whistle on its racketeers? What political party "fact sheet" hoists the soiled linen of its own outfit? I have a friend in a European capital where each newspaper is a party organ. He tells me that by read-



ing five of them carefully he can get an approximation of what is really going on.

The world, unhappily, is pretty well advanced in atomic fission but way behind in the business of truth-telling. Half a century ago it made little difference whether people, separated by thousands of miles, regarded each other as foreign devils, cannibals, frog-eaters, gringos, greasers, wops, hunkies, spiks, and wife-traders. But in this suddenly-compressed globe, coddled prejudices, nurtured misunderstanding, and stupid stereotypes are pretty expensive luxuries. Twisted and inadequate journalism, even way back in the boondocks, is a potential menace to us all.

Because so much of the press throughout the world has no commercial tradition, it is run by people who are zealots, philosophers, politicians, agitators, or all four combined. Some of these are very sincere people. But they are still only vaguely familiar with the techniques of objective journalism. They are less concerned with who, what, why, when, and where than with what they would like to have their readers think. And because most of them live under the shadow of government pressure they cannot conceive a press that does not.

In Cairo last June a very lovely girl political writer on one of the leading Egyptian dailies told me brightly and quite matter-of-factly that America had the most censored press in the world. Her reasoning was quite simple. The U.S. government had given a great deal of aid to Israel. American newspapers had printed much favorable news about Israel. Therefore, it seemed quite plain to her that American newspapers were taking daily orders from Washington.

There are, however, some hopeful signs. Oddly enough, a successful circulation drive by communist newspapers in Honk Kong is one of them. The Red-controlled morning newspaper has developed the best sports page in town, free from ideological malarkey, in an effort to gain readers. Still more oddly, the communist evening newspaper for the same reason has developed a fine financial page. These excursions into objective journalism by a political system that has heretofore dealt wholly in propaganda are recognition of the fact that, where the party cannot control everything the public reads, it had better deliver them something

worth reading. This smart move by the Reds has already resulted in upgrading other Honk Kong dailies.

In Tehran there is the story of Pepsi-Cola. Tehran has a million people but only 100,000 can read. Of the nine daily newspapers the largest has a circulation of 12,000. Until recently all advertising has been limited to small cards, patent medicine plugs, doctors' announcements, etc. Then Pepsi-Cola came in to challenge the other purple belly-wash from Atlanta that had already swept the non-alcoholic Moslem world.

Pepsi-Cola began buying quarter-page and then half-page ads in the top Iranian papers. Nothing like that had ever happened before. I don't know how you say "Pepsi-Cola hits the spot, a quarter-liter's quite a lot" in Persian, but the campaign has been very successful. So recently other advertising has begun to appear. The strongest papers are gradually getting stronger. They are running more pages, hiring more reporters, expanding news and feature services. Strength feeds on strength and the weak sisters are beginning to drop off. It is possible that Pepsi-Cola, without in the least intending to, may bring about a new day of more responsible journalism in the Middle East.

Or take the story of Sears-Roebuck in South America. The folks in Sears are fine people, but the way they argue with us about our rates makes me doubt that improvement of the press is one of their chief objectives. Yet, unwittingly, Sears has begun to revolutionize Latin journalism. The first Sears store that went into Rio brought the first American-style retail display advertising ever seen on that continent. That, plus a rigid one-price system, plus American merchandising methods, plus an enticing bargain basement, started a retail revolution. Old established stores in Rio began to departmentalize and to buy newspaper space. Sears expanded to Sao Paulo, to Lima, to Caracas, and Bogotá, and the revolution went with it.

I'm going down to Havana soon to the convention of the Inter-American Press Association. There, a lot of feisty Latin American editors are going to get together to discuss censorship, to battle newsprint quotas, demand the repeal of confiscatory press taxes, and interview each other on how to improve their newspapers. I don't believe that it is entirely coincidental that there was no such organization before Sears hit South America. Certainly the sharp



increase in paid advertising in the last decade has beefed-up the pride, the potency, and the independence of the Latin press.

So I say without apology or shame, God bless the advertisers. Hooray for the high-level hucksters who sell the ad contracts. Hooray for the agency people, the copy runners and the lay-out men. No editor could ride forth to joust with ogres if someone didn't feed his war-horse. Our blasts would be feeble without a working bugle.

We can pontificate all we want about the freedom of the press as though that were a detached and isolated virtue. But maybe this freedom will be advanced more readily by the expansion around the world of techniques of mass selling than by pious and lofty resolutions among editors. Under intelligent management the commercial press is the answer to the kept press. It is the antidote for the cowardly press and the corrupt press. And in the expansion of the commercial press the ad man casts his shadow against the clouds. He is living, perhaps, a more significant life than he has realized, and coming generations may be deeply in his debt.

#### A THOUGHT OF EPAMINONDAS

By JAMES BOYER MAY

Instead of junctioned Megalopolis,  
adjacent cave now holds the symbol.  
What 4th B.C. Greeks kept harbored there,  
we are not sure—no more than they  
should know the icon from St. Luke.  
A monastery thrives in open monster  
crypt, protected outpost  
purposing dissent from Spartans,  
Russ or whom, or modern contra-  
Arcady ideas. Madonna-wise,  
or back to Bacchus . . . loves and idyls, all—  
and whether amorous or trysting  
sacrifice—a right to dwell  
in peace with one's own aims, profane or Godly.

## PATTERNS

By CHARLOTTE L. MARLETTO

here is the vine untrellised  
crying in the wilderness  
horizontal to a summer-height with no love to cling to.  
this man down mainstreet bottle-comforted—  
this woman jewel-grabbing caramel-eating—  
scattering their children like bewildered pigeons  
in tendrils untwined as themselves  
have found round by round the old traditions  
break and fall away.  
what shall they cling to then but their hunger  
making it into a pattern of their days . . .

but making is waking a starting out of sleep  
a six-thirty alarm cutting away the comfort  
of pillowed custom, a resistance  
to the morning's cold floor of reason.

out of the root reaches yesterday's maternal hand  
staying the warm womb-like configuration  
in the bed of safeness  
out of the sun reaches the promise of bloom  
and the inner pull into goldness.

the stretching of our being is between these poles  
a conflict  
but on love's lattice is the vine of our being spread  
leaf by tendril warmed in the sensate summer winding  
to the waking seed.

## Sunday

BERTRAM METTER

Morris Cohen reached his hand out into the darkness and searched for the table. He bumped it awkwardly, paused, felt carefully along it for the clock. He grasped the clock tightly and brought it close to his face. Five-fifteen. Only ten minutes since last time. It seemed longer than that—a half-hour at least. He quietly replaced the clock and shut his eyes. He resolved to fall asleep and then wake suddenly and find the day had burst into life. The memories and echoes of the past week loomed, exploded, and unraveled all about him. He lay still and tried to shut them out. A truck rumbled by, destroying the quiet in the street below. His wife, who was snoring in bed next to him, stirred slightly. He tried to focus on the approaching day: the week was a trip aboard a speeding train, a plummeting through the darkness of a giant tunnel; Sunday would bring him flashing into the bright air. He was chained to the earth, left to die in a land of never-ending night; Sunday would pass over him, shedding light and warmth. Or, better, Sunday was a young secret love he had, a slim blonde girl who would open her arms to him. That was the best. Finally, thrashing through the familiar images, his mind was caught in their soft web, and he fell asleep.

The edge of the black sky paled. A narrow strip of blue appeared along the horizon and widened to cover all the sky. When Morris woke, it was light and streaks of the sun were coming through the windows. He lay motionless in bed, staring up at the white ceiling and thinking about Sunday. His eyes roamed along the cracks in the plaster and after a while the cracks were winding surging rivers sweeping him along, and Sunday was with him, rushing from the bed and the dresser and the walls, and everything was cool and blue and far away.

Alongside him, his wife's snoring stopped. She shifted an arm, unfolded a leg, and sat up slowly, mechanically, as if she were be-

ing lifted by some invisible pulley. She blinked at the daylight and sighed.

"Morris, are you asleep?" She peered at some spot high on the opposite wall as if her husband were hanging from it.

Morris said, "No," as he said every morning.

She yawned, reached a fleshy arm out from under the thin sheet which covered her, snapped on a bedside radio to keep up with things, and then, grunting and coughing, turned over and went back to sleep.

Morris slid out from under the sheet and sat on the edge of the bed. The brisk and important-sounding voice of the news commentator filled the room, but Morris was gazing through the open window at a flock of sparrows busily fluttering about on the fire escape. One perched near the sill reminded him of his crotchety next-door neighbor. She was probably a sparrow come to life, Morris concluded, but that wouldn't explain why she screamed so when he scattered bread crumbs for the birds. He puzzled over her for a while, this sharp, eternally complaining old woman with yellow-stained grey hair and fierce, restless, unhappy eyes—so unlike Sunday—but he soon gave her up and concentrated on the old, faded-green easy chair across the room.

He stared at it and pretended Sunday was sitting there. Soon he could almost see her blonde hair and slim figure: her legs were crossed, her arms were folded, and she was smiling at him.

"Morris, why you sitting and looking? Why ain't you dressed yet?"

He stood up quickly and removed his brown robe from the nail on the back of the closet door. He slipped it on and went into the bathroom to wash and shave. He scowled at the bathroom window: large, bare, an ugly sheet of discolored speckled glass. It was a great annoyance. Every winter it had to be shut tight and lined with rags, and every summer, with much splintering of wood and scraping of fingers, it had to be pried loose again. Now, in the warm weather, it was always opened wide, and, as usual, a great rush of early-morning sunlight streamed through it and fell like a spotlight around the small oval white-tile sink.

Morris leaned over, turned on both faucets, and scrutinized himself in the mirror of the medicine cabinet. He dropped his jaw to lengthen his oval, bloated profile, and, with his jaw still droop-

ing, rotated his head slowly from side to side. His deep-set, dark eyes followed his reflection sadly, brooding at it from all angles until, all at once, he caught his own somber stare, and smiled. Oh, it's not that bad, he scoffed, not that bad at all.

Six mornings of the week he washed half-frightened at the sight of himself, but not on Sunday. On Sunday it was not too bad, not too bad considering. And then, thinking about it brought the week back, suddenly, without warning, all telescoped together. Instinctively he turned away, tried not to think of it, but his mind, cornered, turned to meet it, fled back through it:

He saw himself sweating through the long day at the luncheonette, running back and forth behind the counter, dishing out hurry-up sandwiches and hot coffee and malteds and penny halavah and change for a quarter so I can make a phone call, and God knows what else. He felt his mouth run dry as he stood in the thick heat with his hands hanging at his sides, dumbly waiting for the rotating fan to send its fleeting breeze across his hot face. He heard its dull hum and saw his boss standing beside it; frowning over crooked, horn-rimmed glasses; eyeing him suspiciously; following his bald, globular head like some weird human counterpart of the fan; holding out his hairy arms in mock supplication; prodding him in a pained, injured voice:

"Nu, Morris? Today, not tomorrow. Why do you come in if you're so tired, Morris? Why don't you stay home to sleep? Go, Morris, go lay down in back. I'll work and you I'll give the pay. You should worry if I lose the business. Go, Morris, go lay on the floor inside."

Morris felt his head throbbing. His eyes strained to see through the clouds of steam vapor over the grill. He felt the perspiration as it crept slowly, trickling down his back, his sides, his legs. He saw himself shaking sloppy plates over the refuse can, plunging them from the hot soapy water to the cold oily water, over and over again until everything began to turn, spinning around and around like the trapped whirlpool of suds about to be sucked down the drain.

That was when he began to wait, dreaming about Sunday and the trip to the beach, the beach and the cool, cool ocean. He lugged rattling cases of soda up from the cellar and counted the days. He stood trying to dry his hands on his dirty apron and

watched the slow hands on the big electric clock over the pinball machine and counted the hours. And after a while he tired of that and he counted in percentages: today is Tuesday. Two days are gone and four are left. That's two over six, that's a third. He pictured a huge pie with a third cut out of it. A third is a lot. A third is a lot. Soon.

Or he watched the box of chocolate-covered marmalades he set out fresh on the counter every Monday, a neat white box, filled to the top, brimming with three layers of candy and covered with a smooth thin sheet of wax paper. It would last a week. He watched it emptying, knowing that Saturday, when finally it was tossed into the garbage, the wax paper soiled and crushed into a little ball, he would be home soon, stretched out in bed on Sunday morning, relaxed and quiet, with the sun pouring in the window and the shining day ahead of him. Not much longer. Soon. A third is a lot.

"Come, Morris. Breakfast is ready."

He doused his face frantically with cold water and reached for a towel.

Morris sat with arms folded on the kitchen table, his head bowed as if in meditation, waiting for his wife to serve. She moved through the ritual of preparation with interminable slowness, shuffling heavily back and forth between the table, the stove, and the ice box. The Sunday breakfast she prepared was an elaborate affair—radishes, peeled oranges, celery stuffed with cream cheese, smoked white fish, hot cereal, hard-boiled eggs, and potato pancakes—compensation for the gulped coffee and juice of the week. Morris ate greedily, without lifting his eyes from the plate. His wife stood looking down into the street.

"Slow, Morris, eat slow," she cautioned, proclaiming it to the window.

Unheeding, he gobbled frantically from habit.

"Slow, Morris, slow."

As he finished each course, she carried the dish off to the sink, set it down, ran warm water over it, and returned with whatever was next. Then she resumed her post at the window.

"Morris, a taxi is stopped downstairs."

He showed no sign of having heard her.

"It's Mrs. Braunstein from downstairs. Her sister-in-law brings her home from the hospital. Three months ago in the middle of the night her bed collapsed. She sued the landlord."

Unmindful of his wife's observations, Morris moved rapidly through the meal and finally, still chewing and swallowing the last of his food, fell back exhausted and surrendered himself to the peaceful, calm, heavy feeling which was beginning to settle over him.

When she saw he had done, his wife walked to the table and sat: painfully lowering herself, slowly, slowly, bending gradually over the chair, poising over it, finally dropping her rump onto it with an explosive sigh.

Then she had her large, brimming cup of coffee—only one cup a day the doctor had warned—and a roll which she picked at, buttering each torn piece before she ate it. She sat sideways at the table with the Sunday paper spread out on her lap. Every few minutes she twisted around and reached absently for the coffee or the roll. Each time she did so, pages of the newspaper slid to the floor. Soon most of it was scattered at her feet.

"Morris, a young couple sold their child for a thousand dollars." She spoke without looking up.

"Some people," he nodded, hardly listening.

"Can you imagine, Morris?"

The exertion of getting his food down had passed, his heavy breathing had subsided, and he sat stuffed and contented, watching the slow course of a fly buzzing lazily over the table. For Morris, the luxury of Sunday breakfast was not in the eating, but in the sitting afterwards without the compulsion to hurry off to work. He rubbed his hands together in enjoyment of the leisure and in anticipation of the day still to come.

Good, quiet, Sunday. Good Sunday.

"Morris, also, three years ago they sold another child, also for a thousand dollars. Do you believe it, Morris?"

He shrugged noncommittally. Nailed to the wall opposite him hung a picture, a gaudy field of daffodils adorning the upper half of a savings bank calendar. He looked at it admiringly. Often he thought of it at the luncheonette, thought of being able to hide his face in the sweet, damp flowers.



We ought to have flowers on the table, he said to himself. At least on Sunday, flowers. Sunday is the flower day, Sunday is a flower.

"The judge told them," his wife said, her lips twisted in indignation. "Oh, boy, he told them. Liebowitz is the judge's name, Morris. Morris, the judge is Liebowitz. Judge Liebowitz."

After a while she swept the crumbs from her lap and rose, dumping the remainder of the paper on the floor. She walked slowly to the sink, sliding her feet as if they were too heavy to lift, and began to wash her dishes.

You could even eat in a garden. I don't see why not. Sunday could wear a flower in her hair. She could sit with me in the garden. It would be very sunny with shade around the table. There would be tall flowers bending right over. All around her face, flowers bending over.

His wife spoke looking down into the sink: "Chicken, Morris? Or bologna and the chicken for tonight? Morris, what kind sandwiches? Chicken?"

The crowded subway clattered hurriedly toward the beach. Morris squirmed joyously in his seat, resplendent in his favorite faded purple-and-white checkered sport shirt; his worn, spotted trousers; and his half-laced sneakers still itchy with last week's sand. To him, the rattling train was escaping. It too had been caught in the scramble and only now had gathered courage to screech to a halt, to turn tail and flee. He looked at the people around him, at the T-shirts, the sandals, the dungarees, the white blouses, and the flaring summer-print skirts. He viewed unbuttoned collars approvingly and thought with satisfaction of all the shed ties and suit jackets locked somewhere in hot apartments. The headlong dash to work was over and the smells, the sounds, and all the sharp minute details of the luncheonette were obliterated in the joyful rumpus of the trip. The desperate shoving and pushing was gone; the binding tensions of the week had snapped, and Morris' untucked shirt-tails flapped unconcernedly in the draft of the whirling electric fan.

From the seat in front, a tiny, powdered baby with frightened eyes peered back over its mother's shoulder and cautiously reached

a sticky green lollypop out to him. Morris smiled self-consciously and turned to his wife, but she had the reassembled Sunday paper with her and was engrossed in the details of a Hollywood axe murder. Morris frowned disapprovingly. He himself seldom took time to read. During the week he was so exhausted he fell asleep on the couch immediately after supper, and Sunday was too valuable to spend puzzling over the eccentricities of the world. He closed his eyes in the warm haze of light which penetrated the dirty subway window and listened to the dull rumble of the train.

The dingy sides of the bumping, heaving car were suddenly streaked with silver. He was on a roaring cross-country express, flashing through the vibrant night in excited haste, speeding somewhere wonderful. The station he arrived at was small, rural, bright, lined with rows of evenly clipped hedges. Around it were vast stretches of fields and trees, and beyond them great green hills rose in the misty distance. He stepped down from the train, brushed the soot and dust from his neatly pressed tropical suit, and gulped deep clean breaths of the fresh country air. Behind him, jets of steam and white smoke hissed from the stationary engine. He searched the strange faces and found Sunday. She wore a neat grey suit with yellow flowers pinned at her shoulder. Beside her stood a sleek red convertible, and there was a small pile of shiny tan luggage at her feet. She smiled her sweet smile, waved, and started edging towards him. He fought his way through the crowd, hurrying to meet her. She threw herself into his arms. The little hat she wore fell to the ground, and she crushed the flowers against him.

The subway ground noisily into a station; the streaks of silver melted and the scene was dispelled.

"Morris, have you got the sandwiches?"

"Yes."

"Where?"

"Right here on the seat."

"Be careful they don't get squashed."

"Yes."

"You want to read the paper?"

"No."

"You never read the paper, that's why you never know what's

going on in the world. You should read the paper more instead of dreaming so much."

"I'm not dreaming."

"You would read the paper more, you would be better off." She embarked on the account of a starlet's third divorce.

Morris turned disconsolately and stared out the window. He watched the scenery flashing past. A weather vane gleamed in the sun. He pretended it was a pinwheel. It had seven spokes. Six of them were colorless, but the seventh was for Sunday and it was bright silver and blue with gay specks of orange and gold. Each day a colorless wing slipped by and the brilliant wing came closer and closer until at last it was Sunday and he was strolling down Fifth Avenue with a yellow flower in his buttonhole and a white handkerchief folded neatly in the breast pocket of his new blue suit. It was Easter and everyone wore fine holiday clothes. Sunday carried the gay pinwheel and held his arm. There was laughter and admiring glances, but Sunday would look only at Morris. She slipped her hand into his.

"Don't forget the sandwiches." Morris' wife poked him in the side. "Come."

He snatched up the brown paper bag and let himself be swept out of the train. They walked slowly along the "el" platform to the stairs marked "To the Street." She clutched the bannister and descended with great care, fearfully avoiding the screaming youths who charged down three steps at a time. Morris followed behind. In the sunlight and noise downstairs they picked their way along two blocks lined with freshly painted summer bungalows and small, open-air refreshment stands. Steam rose from the hot sidewalks and Morris' sneakers, slapping the pavement, felt oily inside from the sweat.

They passed through the cool damp passageway under the boardwalk and stood at the edge of the beach. Morris' wife surveyed the sprawled masses with great disgust, as if they were encroaching on her property, but Morris felt a certain joy listening to the confusion of sounds and looking out over the numberless, disorganized crowd. His wife chose what she judged to be the shortest route to the shore and stepped fretfully out into the heat. She puffed along in the sand like a big fat mouse poking through a maze. Morris followed in her wake, stepping carefully along,

trying not to tread on anyone, and catching exasperated looks from people showered by the sand his wife kicked up behind.

After a long search they found a narrow stretch of sand bare of the dried seaweed, popsicle sticks, and old peach pits which dotted the beach, and spread their blanket. Morris began at once to unpack the sandwiches, but his wife removed a rubber bathing cap from her purse and prepared to bathe.

Resting a few seconds, then breathing deeply and wiping herself under the chin with a large, damp handkerchief, she shuffled slowly down to the water. She proceeded cautiously into the ocean, holding one hand wrapped tightly about the safety rope and bracing herself and retreating a bit each time a wave approached. When, finally, she stood hip-deep, she splashed her shoulders and her ample bosoms with short, rapid movements of her free hand. Then she turned, took firm hold of the rope with both hands, and dunked herself four times, emitting a rapturous "ah-h-h-h" each time. Still clinging to the rope, she left the water, and, while Morris waited, stood silently, patiently dripping next to the blanket until the sun had dried her. Then they ate.

When the last of the gritty bologna sandwiches was gone and the thermos bottle drained of its iced tea, Morris' wife tore a thin strip from the sports page of the newspaper and fussily arranged it under the bridge of her sunglasses. When she got it hanging exactly, protectingly over her already reddened nose, she turned her face lovingly to the sun and lay back on the blanket to sleep.

Morris sighed with relief. There were no eyes upon him; he was alone again at last. Sprawled on the torn blanket, watching the familiar shifting crowd, he felt completely happy. He looked around him, picked out random figures—smoothly tanned young girls; old, paunchy men with sunburnt bald heads; pale, long-legged gangling boys—and examined them with an amused curiosity.

Of all the week this was his moment of pleasure, better even than creeping into bed at night after the day's work. Here there was no panicky feeling of having to sleep, no sensing the morning's weariness, no radio blaring in the apartment above, no warm wrinkled sheets nor the sweet oppressive odor of the citronella oil his wife spread liberally over her body every night.

He turned to face the sun. The scene was vivid before him;

details stood out with unbelievable clarity. He seemed to be sitting, infinitely small, at the center of a vast panorama. Surely there was no other reality and he had not moved since last week. It was as if he had merely turned to a mirror and only now had looked away. All that had gone between was something far away, lost, a dream, a lie.

From the boardwalk he heard the ordered, mechanical lilt of the carousel music floating above the raucous gabble of the crowd. He felt his flesh tingle at the cool contact of the wind cutting through the heat. His arms and legs felt strong pressing firmly against the comfortable hardness of the sand. He scanned the beach, the sky, the ocean. He wished he could possess the instant permanently. He longed, like something dusty and parched, to soak it up, store it forever.

The world seemed to hover about him in perfect order. He felt calm and rested, yet aware, alert. He was the hub and the universe radiated peacefully outward. In a while he grew drowsy staring. He looked up at the sun and closed his eyes under its warmth. When he looked away the flickering after-image danced before him. Through the sleepy heat he saw Sunday at last, striding towards him, beautiful and erect, etched clearly against the blurred sweep of the crowd and the dazzling brilliance of the sun. He saw her blue bathing suit, her bright eyes, her body slim and smooth.

The week had been so long, but this was realization again, the sweet hot center of it.

At last, at last.

He rushed to meet her.

Morris reclined comfortably on the couch with his hands folded peacefully in his lap and his head tilted back on a cushion. Through the red-figured lampshade a soft, rosy hue spread tentatively into the room, softening the darkness, and from the kitchen the faint aroma of cooked chicken and fried fat hung stubbornly in the air. Below, a trolley rattled and strained around a deserted corner. Sounds in the street seemed to die half-muffled in the summer night. The radio droned dully, unheard like the ticking of the clock. Morris' wife sat across the room in an easy chair turned

to the door so she could read by the light from the kitchen. After a few minutes she looked up from her paper and turned inquisitively toward her husband.

"Morris, you want ice cream?"

"No." He answered quickly, automatically, without considering, guarding his privacy rather than rejecting the suggestion.

"I'll get for myself."

"Get."

She sat for a while longer and then rose slowly, spilling the paper. She moved slowly to the dresser, fished, squinting for change, in a small dish, dropped a nickel, peered sadly after it as it rolled around and around and at last was lost in some dark corner, said she would look for it tomorrow when she cleaned, moved slowly to the door with her clenched purse, and then, thinking of something, turned slowly back to her husband.

"Morris, take your bath."

"All right." He indicated no agreement, merely that he had heard.

"Morris, don't forget, take."

"All right."

She continued out slowly.

He listened to the stairs creaking under her weight, to the door slamming shut downstairs, to the sudden silence, and then she was gone and he sat for a while, alone in the empty room. Finally, feeling somehow that he had the obligation, he went dejectedly to take his bath.

A steady stream of hot water poured into the tub. He put his head back on the rim and shut his eyes. His body was washed clean of the last traces of sand, and with the sand went the day. He tried to conjure up the blue sky and the roll of the ocean again, but all he could hear was the running of the faucets. The room filled with steam. The electric light bulb above him was a yellow blob. Beads of water ran down the peeled paint of the walls.

Afterward he sat wrapped in his robe, relaxing and looking into the kitchen where his wife bent heavily over a plate of melting strawberry ice cream. She put down the spoon, wiped her thumb on the table cloth, and carried the dish into the living room. Morris frowned as she approached.

"Morris, ice cream."

"I don't want."

"But I bought."

"You bought for you, no?"

"I had downstairs."

He took the dish reluctantly, but ate carefully, with relish, as every week, and when he had done he reclined drowsily on the couch, unwilling to face the bedroom and the admission of the morrow. The warm bath had drained the last of his nervous energy and he felt a complete physical weakness. It was the most peaceful time of all for him, akin almost to death.

The beach, the bath, the ice cream, it was all over. The week had been lived for the day, and now that too was fading. Tomorrow—but he tried not to think of that. He tried not to look at the door to his bedroom, but the design on the carpet pointed to it, the walls ran around to it, the little chalk sailor on the dresser looked out at it, and all the shadows seemed to fall at its threshold. The bare, hard outline of the doorway became a giant mouth ready to swallow him, a cave, a trap, the black hub of an arm waiting to catapult him hurtling through another week.

He forced himself to concentrate on the day. He tried desperately to return to it, to reach back and recapture the hot, white flashes of it: a girl's shoulder; the glint of the sun on the ocean; the warm wood smell of the boardwalk; a bright red kerchief bobbing in the crowd, suddenly prominent, then gone. Sunday coming to him across the beach, golden-limbed, sweetly flowing as from the sun. . . .

They wandered down the white stretch of sand to the water's edge and watched a group of children building castles. Sunday said it would be fun, so they knelt with the children and played and weren't ashamed. Morris scooped up dripping fistfuls of wet sand and twisted them around and around until they mounted into jagged spires. They built a castle with a moat and a dam, but a wave rushed over everything and melted it.

They laughed and wandered into a crowd watching three men perform acrobatic tricks, and later they stood and sang with a group gathered about a young girl strumming a ukulele. They



smiled at a little girl who was lost being paraded around on a policeman's shoulder, and laughed at a short fat man with tattooed arms sleeping with his head under a newspaper. They bought cotton candy and crackerjacks and watched a man sketching scenes on a large white pad.

They walked farther down the beach to a spot where there were few swimmers. Hand in hand they waded out, laughing at the sudden tingling chill of the water churning about their feet and wincing at the feel of the hard-surfaced shells imbedded in the smooth yielding sand. They watched the gently gliding gulls skim the surface, patiently searching for food, and then they returned to the beach and sat together, he and Sunday, watching the waves wash upon the shore, splash against the jetty, flash suddenly into the air and then fall foaming back into the sea. They lay back on the warm texture of the sand, felt the salt breeze, and listened to the low rolling of the ocean. Lying flat they could look straight up, and they stared high and away into the endless, cloudless sky, losing themselves in the immensity of it, losing, for the moment, all sense of proportion, all attachment to the earth.

Morris awoke shivering and looked up at the dark sky. It was almost evening. The sun was gone and Sunday was pressed against him to keep warm. She was trembling and pleaded with him to start back, but he asked to stay just a while longer. He rested his head in her lap and they remained that way, close together, until, almost against his will, he heard someone up the beach, faintly calling his name. Through the grey light he could just make out two approaching figures. When they came closer he saw it was his wife, plodding clumsily in the sand, shouting to him in an urgent high-pitched voice and, walking beside her, a policeman.

Morris rose fearfully and confronted them. He held up one hand, signalling them to wait until he could say goodbye to Sunday, but the policeman, misunderstanding, rushed forward and clutched at his arm. Morris drew back, turned, and began running up the beach. The policeman sprinted after him, and Morris, confused and tripping in the sand, wheeled desperately and fled stumbling and splashing into the ocean. The policeman started after him, screaming and wetting his shoes and pants, but Morris blindly floundered out.

Strollers on the boardwalk had seen, and soon an excited crowd

lined the shore, yelling and pointing out to the bobbing figure. Morris could no longer hear the hysterical cries of his wife or the shouts of the policeman, only the crowd dimly through the surf. The cold chill of the water cleared his mind and, for a single uncertain instant, he thought of turning back, but somehow salvation seemed to lie ahead, where the black sea merged with the black sky, obscuring the thin peaceful line of the horizon he had watched so often. Breakers washed over his head. His arms and legs grew numb and weary, and he choked on gulps of stinging salt water. Sputtering and kicking he strove vainly to keep his head up, but wave after wave hammered him down.

He sank gasping and clutching, lower and lower, until everything flowed dull and cold, bubbling and gurgling around him. All the tension passed from him and he floated without impulse, quiet and still, safe at last in the dark green depth. Then, like a thin beam of light, a vision of Sunday flickered through his mind. He could see her somewhere above him, vaguely in the darkness, imploring him, reaching out her arms. Suddenly deciding, summoning himself, girding for the effort, gritting desperately, he started up, seeking her, climbing, slowly at first, slowly up, then wildly, fighting frantically, stretching, reaching, straining, until finally, coughing and gasping, he shattered the dark surface and broke through. . . .

"Morris, go inside to sleep." His wife looked over at him crossly.

He sat up quickly, searching for Sunday in the darkness. She sat across the room in an easy chair. She lowered outstretched arms and stared at him blankly. Her face was gaunt, drawn; her smile twisted. Her bare thin arms, resting motionless on the arms of the chair, gleamed yellow; her long, blue-veined fingers dangled limply. Her hair was grey, and in the glow of the lamp, streaked with red. Her hollow cheeks moved. Her thin wrinkled lips dropped open, gaped dumbly. As Morris watched, chilled, she withered and died; the image was gone.

Sunday is dead. Sunday is dead again.

On the other side of the room he heard his wife rattling her paper.

"Morris, it says here, three men, when the ship sank, stayed alive on the water thirty days."

Half asleep, he strained to hear her.

"On a raft, Morris, thirty days. Leather belts they chewed to keep alive. Could they be so brave? Morris, can you believe it?"

Morris saw himself clearly now, sitting in the half-darkened living room. He smiled.

"I am the bravest man in the world," he declared suddenly.

His wife frowned, not following. "You, Morris?" she said incredulously. But he had already risen, and, fighting sleep, walked into the bedroom.

## BIRTH

By PAUL PETRIE

To town one night—a man with worried eyes,  
a girl—great beads of dark upon her face  
and morning in her body. No room, no place  
to ease the rougher edge of birth's surprise,  
and so to a stable, and there among the beasts  
the child was born—with swine, goats, with bawling  
oxen, doves who crushed against the stalls  
their wings, and a cock (of all that crew the worst).  
They say that night the angels sang; a star  
conducted kings and wisemen to the barn  
with frankincense and myrrh. Perhaps it was true;  
but still there was no room, and the man was poor.  
Among the beasts—the swine, the cock that crew,  
his son was born; and angels barred the door.

## Australia touches the tape

BRIAN ELLIOTT

I suppose my title is an odd one. I use it because it is Olympic year in Australia. The games were held in Melbourne, and throughout the world, at least for a short period, Australia was in the news. Already many people to whom the name meant nothing are curious to know more, and because I am an Australian visiting the United States, I am asked many questions. They are very mixed questions, and some, I am bound to state, much more sensible than others. What sort of a place is Australia? Where did I learn to speak English? Do I keep a pet kangaroo? Have we a colour problem? Is Australia still a frontier country?

I can answer most of these enquiries in a very broad way by pointing out that in some respects Australia is very much like America. It is a large land surface, in area about the same size as the United States, and its population is almost entirely of European origin. The numbers, however, are small; even yet the figure has not reached ten million. This is a reflection of the country's lesser fertility, for where water is scarce and the land is arid, great populations cannot flourish. Beautiful and fertile country is to be found, especially in the southern and eastern coastal fringes; these parts, from Queensland through coastal New South Wales to Victoria and southeastern South Australia, are the California of the South Pacific. Behind these richer lands there are various mountain ranges, not so high as the Sierra but high enough to cause a similar rain shadow, so that the country inland is comparatively waterless. And there the physical similarity ends; for Australia has nothing resembling the spine of the Rockies, which gives moisture to continental America. The interior of Australia is mostly undulating desert land, much like parts of Arizona or Nevada. It is good sheep or cattle country provided that one all-important problem can be solved—that of water for man and stock.

Australians do not always equate fertility with beauty. Certainly you may in many parts find flourishing European trees and lush

meadow grass, rippling brooks, and sleek cattle by the milking-sheds. (Australia is not, incidentally, a country of barns, for the farm animals do not need to be housed in winter.) You may find cottage gardens with daffodils and violets and mignonette. There may be bushes of sweet lavender or rosemary to give off a pungent perfume as you brush by them. But these, however delightful, are the charms of a conventional countryside and belong, as most Australians instinctively feel, to poetry and picture-books. That convention dies hard may be seen in the institutional cotton-wool snow and wax holly-berries of an Australian Christmas celebration. Christmas comes in midsummer, when there are no berries on the holly at all (and holly is a rare plant in most parts anyway); and as to snow, for all but a few Australians, it is a phenomenon principally incident to Christmas cards. True, there is snow in plenty—more than in Switzerland, it is said—on the Australian Alps, and winter sports are active and popular; but they occupy only a small corner of the country. They do not make snow a reality for the children of Brisbane or Perth or Adelaide, hundreds of miles away. Nevertheless the shops at Christmas time always feature snow scenes, Santa Claus (known, however, as Father Christmas) in a red robe and drawing frosty breath, driving a reindeer team. This is unreal but enjoyable; the children expect it. So in a way with the soft European landscape, the oaks and elms and poplars, the meadow grass and the daffodils. They are lovely to look at and in some parts they are now completely and happily at home. But Australians never forget that these things are not native. So there is always a conflict—no, less than a conflict, but still a vivid sense of contrast—between the native landscape and the orderly beauty that has been imposed upon it. From imposed European values the native bush, where it survives, is a refuge. Here then is a characteristic which is firmly Australian. I do not expect that non-Australians will altogether understand this point of view. Least of all will California readers, for whom the eucalyptus trees imported from Australia have little of the charm they have for us.

The truth is that we are sentimentalists about our country. We know much or even most of it is hard, rough, and barren; and we love it. I think few Americans are so in love with their country—the sheer, magnetic physical landscape of it—as we are with ours.

Scratch an Australian, even the toughest of us, and you will draw the blood of a poet of some elementary sort. The least of us is, on this question, a minor mystic. We are attached to the hard landscape (not, surprisingly, to the profitable lush one) with mystical bonds; they are not to be accounted for, but they are strong. And this of course in spite of a great variety of landscape and topography, even of climate: for Queensland is tropical, Tasmania has a soft climate like Majorca. Mostly, however, the climate could be described as Mediterranean, the variation between winter and summer being in most places rather sharper than, for example, the golden weather of California. People live out of doors a great deal, especially in summer. And everywhere, in spite of the contrasts, there is uniformity in the character of the bush, supplied by the eucalyptus trees in their many forms and species. The whole country is a symphony upon a ground bass: a theme with infinite but always distinctly recognizable variations. No one can live *in* it, without being *of* it. It has a captivity which is irresistible.

To turn to some more commonplace comparisons, life in Australia is very much like what I have seen in California if the difference in population is taken into account; perhaps one should think of California fifty years ago. People dress more conservatively. They drive older automobiles. The pace is slower. The day of the wide freeway has not yet arrived. There is a vivid sense of life and enjoyment. I think Australians understand the art of relaxation better than Americans. They can lie in the sun and waggle their toes and be happy. And there are—as yet—only a few parking meters; time is easy.

The real standards of living are high. If you know where to go, you can eat well, drink well—let me observe in parenthesis that Australian beer is now beginning to be seen, rather expensively, on the shelves of American liquor stores—and be well entertained. Australian table wines are comparable with Californian. Cafe life is however not extensive, and floor shows are uncommon. Burlesque does not flourish. But the theatre is regaining strength. There are periodical tours by the London Old Vic and the Stratford players, bringing us first-rate Shakespeare; and since the recent visit of Queen Elizabeth II, a vigorous local enterprise, called the Elizabethan Theatre Trust, of which Her Majesty is

the Patron, has been set up to encourage the drama at home. Ballet is of high quality and increasing complexity. Music has for many years been in a strong position, both in regard to distinguished performers of world repute and local orchestras, especially in Melbourne and Sydney. Here the policy of the Australian Broadcasting Commission (a national and non-commercial organization) has borne spectacular fruit. Television is only now being instituted, but like the radio, it will divide its forces between commercial and non-commercial dissemination. It is early to speculate, but if the work of the Broadcasting Commission in television parallels its work in radio, it may be expected to have constructive cultural results. Though the Commission has its critics, in general its achievements are well appreciated.

If there is anything in the general standard of life in Australia to deter the visitor, it is not in the absence of quality at the top. It may be that visitors used to a high level of luxury will be disappointed. The Australian tendency is in these matters to be, as we say, penny wise and pound foolish—to be mean about trifles. Your hotel room may not have a bathroom attached, for example; but then, of course, you do not pay for one. On the other hand, the average Australian traveller expects to be boarded where he is bedded, so the usual rate is for bed-and-breakfast; if you do not care for the breakfast which is thrown in ("thrown in" may well describe it in some cases), you pay for it just the same. And you may hunt the streets for somewhere to eat better; for eating houses are infrequent, and few of them open early. Moreover, heaven help the misguided traveller who quarrels with his fate on a Sunday; he may as well decide at the outset to go hungry.

Australians do not, upon the whole, understand the art of fine attentions. They are an egalitarian people and do not always lay themselves out to please. You must take them as they are. It is the customer and not the vendor who is getting the favor; he is as good as you are, but you are at a disadvantage, because you are asking for something. Like as not you want something impossible, and this is very foolish and unreasonable of you. But he will give you friendly advice; he will come out of his shop to show you where the post office is and where you catch your bus. Our commercial manners are not amiable; but we have agreeable aspects. In fact the visitor in order to know us as we would like to be



known must meet us in our houses. He will find then that, contrary to the impression he has formed from the streets and the shopmen, we do actually appreciate the art of living and our wives can even cook. Yes, our wives; for few of us can afford to keep help or would be able to find it if we could. Nor are there any general providers who will supply us with a turkey dinner "to go" —or a TV meal from the deep freeze. Our homes are provided with necessary conveniences, such as refrigerators, but perhaps not many with dishwashers. Gadgets are not unknown but do not abound. There may be only one bathroom in the house and (warning!) it is for washing in, and that's all. So don't just ask to wash your hands—say what you mean. The work of the house is not so easy as for an American housewife in some ways. The vegetables do not come from the chain store already prepared, frozen, and ready to pop into the pot. So shelling peas and stringing beans is not unknown in Australia. But it is pleasant occupation if time isn't too pressing and you can sit in the sun.

I have answered and expanded upon some of the miscellaneous questions that people ask me. As for the ones about the language, the kangaroos, and the colour problem, my immediate impulse is to point out that they imply a curiously picturesque notion of the country. To be asked how I learned English rather stuns me. Australia, until the large post-war influx of immigrants—who have in any case only altered the position superficially—was a country of well over ninety per cent British origin. No member of the Commonwealth is more British in outlook and tradition than Australia (unless it be New Zealand, with a total population of only one million); and no language other than English has ever had any currency in the country. Certainly some of us speak it barbarously. (So do some Americans.) But not all. And in any case, pronunciation and accent are a different matter. As to the kangaroos, I might ask my friend in Boston does he keep a pet coyote? Or a skunk (demilitarised, I hope), or a raccoon, or a beaver? In parts of Australia kangaroos are still numerous, but these parts are far from the haunts of civilization, and the great majority of the people look on the marsupials, though perhaps with an affectionate air of possessive pride, as denizens of the zoo and not of the familiar countryside. Unlike American deer, they do not survive contact with civilization at all, and one will

not find them tame, for instance, even in quite extensive parks. Lastly for the colour problem: it exists, but not so seriously as to throw the economy out of balance. There never was a slave population; the only settlers have been white, and except for a negligible minority of Chinese, the legacy of the gold rushes a hundred years ago, the only non-European stock in Australia is the native aboriginal race. There are so few of them left that when children see them, after having had sentimental lessons about them in the kindergarten, they are inclined to stare. There is a parallel with America here, a fairly close one; but in relation to the Indian, not the Negro.

There remains only the last question, which I am spurred to answer at length. Is Australia still a frontier country?

This is a question which gives me pause. It opens up an enormous scope, and I cannot deal with more than one or two aspects. Since it is a broadly cultural enquiry, I may perhaps best wrestle with it by confining attention to the arts, and in particular to the two arts which most immediately and revealingly sum up or express the state of a country's culture. These are painting and literature.

But first to disentangle some complexities. Australia is a new country, even newer than America by several hundred years if age is measured from the dates of discovery and settlement. She is not newer than the American West, however. Like California, she gained great momentum from her gold rushes, and at about the same time. She is a modern nation, her individual character given some special emphasis by her physical isolation during the important growing years of her culture. But as a new nation, she belongs conspicuously to the new world—the world which took European civilization, transplanted it, and allowed it to flourish in fresh soil and surroundings. As in America, some of her vegetative processes were orderly, some meagre, some monstrous: in this she showed her quality as a "frontier" nation, the term "frontier" being of course American.

When the term "frontier" is applied to Australia it becomes to a degree metaphorical, because the geographical and historical dispositions were not very similar to those in America; but essentially there was a great deal in common if indeed, looking at the expansion not from an American or even any national point of

view but from a broadly European one, Australia were not merely an extension of the expanding world frontier. Hence her new values, like America's, are not absolutely new; they are not new in complete discontinuity with the past. They are new only insofar as they are local. And even then there is no absolute detachment. The old world has suffered revolution and cataclysm and has moved on, too. So in a sense, as well as a geographical New World, there is also a cultural new world. In the arts particularly (foreshadowing other phenomena?) national and local barriers have tended to disappear, and everywhere values are coalescing. In music, sculpture, architecture, and ceramics, for example, there is little to distinguish local affinities, or at any rate there are considerations which transcend them. These arts belong to the world—the new world of art—and it seems to make small difference whether the artist originates in France or America or Australia or Brazil. If the product varies, the objective is constant; it is the spirit of the new cultural world, which is free, universal, modern. Here there is one frontier, not many. Contemporary Australian artists belong to this movement as the others do. It is not, presumably then, in respect of this broad modern frontier that the question is asked about Australia, though the haze needs to be cleared away in front of it before we can come to the frontier which is meant.

The enquiry, perhaps, does not so much concern bent but competency. How adequately do Australian artists function? With what effectiveness in their approach and techniques do they apply themselves to the tasks of modern art? And how deeply is their art rooted in the life of the community? For there is always this paradox to support the barrierless universality of modern art, that the individual artist must grow up in his own local community and lay down roots there before his spirit can spread. What is the richness of the local soil? What spiritual rivers run in the new land?

We are upon the verge of philosophical speculation here, and the terrain is difficult. It is time to come back to concrete data. In literature and painting it is not too hard to show at least how the roots went down, and how the artists, working in local isolation, equipped themselves with a culture. At first distinctly of a "frontier" kind in the simpler sense, the culture in time grew

and now is rich and extensive enough to allow the Australian writer and painter to take his place alongside artists anywhere in the world, whether he chooses at this stage to order his thoughts along restrictedly local or broadly universal lines.

In Australia the frontier stage of painting shared a problem with poetry. Both were concerned, in a way which never troubled American art, with the clarification of an attitude to the local environment. What is meant is something more comprehensive than simple landscape, but the term landscape will epitomize it well enough. No one ever failed to see beauty in the American countryside. America is a land of mountains and rivers, of deciduous trees (especially in the East, where the first foundations of the landscape-myth were laid down) and of well contrasted seasons. Perhaps if America had been explored first from West to East, her patterns might have been ordered differently; for in California as in Australia, few native trees are deciduous and the summer is dry and yellow; hillside and pasture turn to straw, light glitters and heat refracts, in the hot inland valleys a delusive mirage hovers over rocky outcrops and a scanty desert growth. But it was not here that the first settlers landed; and where they did, they had not great difficulty in adapting themselves to a country whose general appearance was not radically different from the mild European landscape they already knew.

There were great difficulties in Australia. In the whole country, apart from the eastern littoral, there is only one large river. The Murray-Darling system, with sources dispersed along the whole extent of the Great Divide from Queensland to Victoria, is comparable, though not so extensive either in length or in volume of flow, with the Mississippi system. Yet great as it is, it waters only a small corner of the continent inside the mountain barrier. Here you may see flourishing irrigation settlements; yet where the water stops, the desert abruptly begins. There was little land, particularly where the first landings were made, to impress the newcomer with visions of fruitfulness upon a European scale. As to the eucalyptus forests, they appeared to him merely drab and dull. He had never seen trees like that before and they seemed grotesque, misshapen; moreover, they failed altogether to change with the seasons. (This was merely a lapse of observation on his part, for the spring growth of the forests is

charming—but it is not *green* like European growth. It is red, amber, and in some cases blue-grey—unnatural colours to the English imagination.) The modern Australian is at home in this landscape as the pioneer settler never was. He is part of it; it absorbs him. The plain may be dusty, the wind hot, the shade of the lonely gum tree thin (if I speak here of “eucalyptus trees” it is only in deference to the custom in California—at home I should no more call a gum tree a “eucalyptus” than you would call an oak a “quercus”). The cattle under the tree chewing their cud may look tired and swish the flies away with lazy tails. Every colour in the prospect may be bleached to pastel; a forsaken, desolate place. Yet there is in the hardest, grimmest landscape something to which every Australian responds. He cannot help it. It is the mystic in him—the sentimentalist if you choose. He did not create the mood—rather the landscape created him, and conditioned him to it. There is nothing here of the romantic beauty Chateaubriand imagined on the banks of the Susquehanna. There is nothing of the exaltation stout Cortés allegedly felt as he gazed on the blue Pacific. It is not even a heroic emotion. It is very difficult indeed to describe. But the quality of it seems to have been there almost from the beginning. And the first struggle of both painters and poets was to comprehend it. The difference of this landscape from the European was fundamental.

Modern observers, looking over the paintings and drawings produced in the early days, frequently complain that the artists could not see straight. From this emerged the notion that gum trees are especially difficult to draw. But modern artists find them easy. Why the difference? The real confusion was caused not by the trees, or rather their forms, but by something else which required a more subtle analysis. It was the quality of the light, whose brilliant effects of contrast in highlights and shadow called for a virtuosity of interpretation for which the early artists were unprepared.

What contemporary criticism tends to forget is that Australia was opened up for settlement in the last years of the eighteenth century—exactly the period of the romantic revival in Europe. If a little time-lag is allowed for the simpler tastes of the masses, from whom in all probability new colonial communities take their characteristics rather than from fashionable movements, it

was at least a period dominated by the ideal of the "picturesque." And it was the picturesque outlines which the earliest poets and painters strove to emphasize. But they were misled. For so small a community a good many paintings—mostly the works of amateurs and dilettantes, but many of them well trained—were produced. At first it was the topographical line which was stressed. Later came scenes of life, lively subjects especially in the time of the gold rushes. There were a few landscapists, though none of distinction before Conrad Martens.

Martens, clearly a disciple of the early Turner, painted rather formal but still delightful landscape views of the country near Sydney. He gave animation to the otherwise dull tree forms by presenting them in charming lights—always the delicate light of morning or sunset, never the bright mid-day. It was Louis Buvelot who first painted gum trees for themselves. His trees have nobility and power, but still they hide their principal secret. He makes them sombre and disposes them in park-like distributions. You will actually see them just like that on the richer pasturelands of Victoria, but to find a prospect resembling one of Buvelot's you would need to go out on a day of grey clouds. Yet Buvelot's landscape is Australian enough to need no advertisement. Rebuked by a lady critic for not putting in any kangaroos, he replied: "They are there, Madame: but they are behind the trees."

It was not until the work of Arthur (later Sir Arthur) Streeton appeared, about 1880, that the secret came out. Streeton poured full daylight on the Australian landscape and gave it life. Here was initiated the Australian equivalent to impressionism in France. Streeton had not at that time been abroad, though he studied in France later. Many of his admirers consider that from the time he began to paint with acquired sophistication, his art declined. Certainly his later canvases lack the simple penetration and intimacy of his earlier ones.

After Streeton the bewilderment of the Australian painters was dissipated. They now knew what to do, if not always how to do it. Landscape continues to be a major interest with them, if not so obsessive a problem as before. The names of Hans Heysen, Elioth Gruner, George Lambert, rest among the distinguished. Of contemporary painters, many are brilliant; there are too many to name individuals, unless an exception be made for Russell



Drysdale, whose expressionistic interpretation of landscape is no longer purely representational art but becomes partly social criticism. Drysdale has some affinities with the American Thomas Benton, especially when he chooses the seedier aspects of the rural scene; but he is grimmer and more acrid than Benton.

Apart from landscape, Australia has produced a great tradition of portrait painters. Here Tom Roberts, George Lambert, and more recently William Dobell are outstanding. But I have not undertaken to survey the portraitists.

Insofar as art served the purpose of depicting or illustrating the character of "frontier" life in Australia, we may turn to numerous early sketches and engravings, some of them intended for book illustrations. Of this sort of thing America also has a very plentiful supply. They depict scenes of colonial life, sometimes casually, sometimes dramatically, and often, of course, with wild exaggeration. Rather more than common interest attaches to the water colour sketches of S. T. Gill, a rover who conned his art from Hogarth or Rowlandson and in his own lesser way presented a richly comic picture of life in Australia. He visited the gold mines and left a delightful but realistic record of his impressions. One is tempted to recall the work of his California contemporary Charles Nahl. But Nahl's art is over-refined by comparison. His style is romantic and his technique meticulous. The shadow of Chateaubriand falls on him, even beyond the Sierra.

In literature the "frontier" approach to landscape is easier to show. A commentator who arrived in New South Wales near the beginning of the nineteenth century remarked that, although abundantly healthy, the environment of the new country was not such as to inspire the sentiment of art. He could not think of it as the birthplace of future poets. This was Barron Field, a friend of Charles Lamb. Although Field himself printed a little book in 1817, which he proudly called *The First Fruits of Australian Poetry*, in one of his sonnets he spoke of Australia as "this prose-dull land" and referred to his release from it as an escape. (I use the words "escape" and "release" with some trepidation; perhaps my American readers, remembering that New South Wales was a convict colony, may conclude Field was a convict. On the contrary, he was a Judge of the Supreme Court and held quite the other end of the stick.)



Later, during the forties, one of the Howitts (of *Howitt's Journal*), writing his impressions of Australia, expressed his sense of the spiritual barrenness of Australia. He could not imagine the possibility of a fine sensibility surviving the impact of such a country. How could poetry thrive in a land without hedgerows or violets or primroses? What fine fibres could be developed in a young man whose treat it was, on some signal occasion, to be taken to see the cattle sales at Wagga Wagga! Not the rhododendrons at Kew or the fountains of Rome but the cattle at Wagga Wagga! The point of view is understandable and the representation of the sad disadvantage of the Australian youth, though grotesque, is not without its justice.

Actually this loss of culture—the destruction of the whole system of polite European sophistication—has in recent times emerged as one of the heroic motives of the Australian myth. During the thirties (indeed one might go back farther but the idea first became articulate then) arose a spate of historical novels along family saga lines in which there is a clear pattern of historical interpretation. The approach is romantic rather than factual, and shows the gentleman pioneer (or he may have been a convict; it makes no difference) who takes up land and struggles to establish himself as a patriarch of the wilderness. The spirit of the land is hostile to the European interloper. It subdues and brutalizes him at the same time as it sustains him. (Here again is the ubiquitous Australian mysticism.) He sinks into decay and oblivion, a new vegetation hero. It is left to his family in the next generation to develop the lines of life; he merely establishes them. The pioneer himself and the culture he originally represents are crushed, eliminated—that is why it is immaterial, really, whether he was gentleman or scum. Nothing human, but the country itself, imposes the new conditions. The process of development is complete when the family itself breaks up. It is necessary first to create, but then to destroy the patriarchal pattern.

To the Australian imagination of today the old pioneers are the elder gods and command veneration; but now the pantheon is a memory—there are no gods, no veneration of individuals. (No, not even wealth commands veneration; the tycoon is rather disliked than revered.) So the pioneer's family disintegrates, having first struggled for existence, then become absorbed into

something greater—the Australian community itself. So the apparent decay is after all a kind of triumph too: the triumph not of an individual or a group, but a people.

Here is a very different approach to life from the American model, yet in spite of an obviously sentimental slant these novels are characteristic, at least of the years when they originated, and perhaps more deeply so. In the thirties there was a growing consciousness of the frontier, and an awareness that it was visibly receding. The novels were an attempt to preserve something of it before the records were gone. (Many of these books were developed out of family diaries, records, and verbal tradition.) Or to state the same case a little differently, the appreciation of history as an intimate, not merely an official or statistical phenomenon, came for the first time into prominence. The best of the novels in this class is undoubtedly Miles Franklin's *All That Swagger*. Applied to life in Sydney, the same pattern is well seen in M. B. Eldershaw's *A House Is Built*. This "historical" style of fiction dominated publication for fifteen or twenty years, and even now belated instances are occasionally finding their way into print.

Of Australian novels with a broader kind of historical background, the outstanding example is Henry Handel Richardson's *The Fortunes of Richard Mahony*, a fine novel by any standards, of which I have seen numerous copies in American libraries. But this is primarily a novel of character. Its setting is Melbourne and Ballarat during the gold rush and a few years after. The frontier details are meticulous, and the presentation of colonial society is vivid. But it stands upon no crusading historical thesis.

These writings all exhibit the Australian imagination at a stage when it became conscious of itself. It is amusing to look back to much earlier times and see that there already existed a tradition of frontier art which was quite spontaneous and, if crude, perfectly unembarrassed.

Since, as everyone knows, Australia was first settled as a penal colony (though it did not retain that character as long as many people think), it would be natural to assume the existence of a mass of crude popular ballads and ditties at an early date. Certainly a great many words and expressions still current in Australian slang had such an origin (for instance, "cove," "moke," from the Cockney, and "beak"—meaning magistrate—from

thieves' argot). So far, however, little has been done to recover the early ballad material, though some of it has come to light and more may yet be discovered. There is plenty of evidence that it existed in force, and in the middle years of the nineteenth century the singing and reciting of ballads became a principal feature of bush and outback entertainment. Nor has the taste for ballads and ditties died out altogether—witness the impact of *Waltzing Matilda*, the song which was sung so lustily by Australian servicemen during both world wars, that everybody knows the tune and even the words may be recognized, if not understood:

Once a jolly swagman camped by a billabong,  
Under the shade of a coolibah tree.  
And he sang as he sat and waited till his billy boiled,  
"You'll come a-waltzing Matilda with me!"

Perhaps it is worth paraphrasing. The words mean that once an easy-going tramp camped by a backwater of some large river, under the shade of a kind of gum tree. As he waited for his pot to boil, he sang: "You'll come tramping the roads with me"—for Matilda is his blanket, or "swag" (another convict word, incidentally, but given a new Australian use). The "jumbuk" featured in a later part of the story is the sheep the swagman steals—a word of unknown origin but probably aboriginal.

Among Australian ballads and ditties two kinds are distinguishable. First came the kind which circulated among the people and came from nobody knows where. It had little musical or literary distinction though it was vigorous and lively. I hesitate to quote from this balladry, not because it was improper—though much of it undoubtedly was so—but because it is often so idiomatic as perhaps to be unintelligible. But here is a simple sample, rather late in origin, on the often-repeated theme of the death of the lonely stockman. (For "stockman" read "cowboy" and you have a reasonably close American parallel.)

Be ye stockmen, or not—to my story give ear—  
Poor Jack's breathed his last—and you no more shall hear  
The crack of his whip, nor his jingling quart pot,  
His clear "Go ahead!" nor his nag's lively trot.  
For they've laid him where wattles

Their sweet fragrance shed,  
And the tall gum trees shadow  
The stockman's last bed . . .

Another ditty from the goldfields may have some appeal, especially as it illustrates the closeness of the tie in those days with the American frontier itself:

At home, if in a bar you stray to have a glass or so,  
The barman doesn't look as if he stood there just for show;  
His apron's on, his waistcoat too, his sleeves turned up as well,  
And as he serves you, on my word, he doesn't cut the swell  
Of these flash Yankee barmen you can see this side the line:  
The fine flash Yankee barman who once cut such a shine.

But here, in these large Yankee bars, behind the counter stands  
A gentleman with fierce moustache, and rings upon his hands,  
His patent boots are faultless, his shirts without a splash,  
Got braceless pants, and round his waist he wears a crimson sash—  
The flash colonial barman you see this side the line:  
The fine flash Yankee barman who once cut such a shine.

Such rhymes are rough and anonymous.<sup>1</sup> But they enlivened every gathering and campfire.

The second kind of popular ballad was a little more formal. It was consciously composed and was printed over the name of the poet—by a stretch it might even be called “literary.” It amounted to frontier poetry of an almost polished quality. If Americans can imagine a whole body of verse upon a national scale, modelled much along the lines of *The Shooting of Dan McGrew* or *Casey at the Bat*—but with room for a great deal of variety and sometimes even a little subtlety—they will have some idea of the Australian “ballad of the nineties.”<sup>2</sup> These ballads brought out the frontier character to perfection—humorous, sentimental, romantic, grotesque, philosophical, independent, egalitarian. The authors, who in their best moments rose to something like inspiration, were men of no cultural pretensions but they knew and spoke eloquently for the Australian people. Among them Andrew Barton Paterson, known in his time as “the Banjo,” was outstanding. The ballad commonly rated his best is a heroic ditty about mustering wild horses, *The Man From Snowy River*. Personally I like

better a more frankly satirical rhyme, *The Man From Ironbark*, whose theme is the common Australian one of country and city rivalry. It is invariably the object of this kind of ditty to demonstrate that the up-country fellow is the better man of the two:

It was the man from Ironbark who struck the Sydney town,  
He wandered over street and park, he wandered up and down,  
He loitered here, he loitered there, till he was like to drop,  
Until at last in sheer despair he sought a barber shop.

He decides to assume the character of a traveled man:

"'Ere, shave my beard and whiskers off, I'll be a man of mark,  
I'll go and do the Sydney toff up home in Ironbark . . ."

It should perhaps be explained that "ironbark" is a particularly tough kind of gum tree; the name connotes rural remoteness.

The barber man was small and flash, as barbers mostly are,  
He wore a strike-your-fancy sash, he smoked a huge cigar . . .

There seems to be something of a Yankee touch about him, though Paterson does not actually say so. His customers on the other hand seem to belong to the "haw-haw" British order, which was mercilessly ridiculed in Australia at that time:

There were some gilded youths that sat along the barber's wall.  
Their eyes were dull, their heads were flat, they had no brains at all . . .

To these exquisites the jocose barber "passed the wink," indicating that he had a plan to "make this bloomin' yokel think his bloomin' throat is cut." Remarking conversationally to his unsuspecting client,

"I s'pose the flats is pretty green up there in Ironbark?"

he dips the razor in the boiling water, then with a theatrical flourish draws the hot blunt edge of it hard across the victim's throat.

Upon the newly shaven skin it made a livid mark—  
No doubt it fairly took him in, the man from Ironbark.

However a cut throat was a small matter to one born and bred in Ironbark. Though believing himself at death's door, the countryman rose to the occasion:

He fetched a wild up-country yell might wake the dead to hear,  
And though his throat, he knew full well, was cut from ear to ear,  
He struggled gamely to his feet and faced the murderous foe . . .

He lifted up his hairy paw, with one tremendous clout  
He landed on the barber's jaw and knocked the barber out.  
He set to work with tooth and nail, he made the place a wreck;  
He grabbed the nearest gilded youth, and tried to break his neck.  
And all the while his throat he held to save his vital spark,  
And "Murder! Bloody murder!" yelled the man from Ironbark.

Though it is explained to him that no harm was really intended and that this was just the barber's little joke, he is unconvinced. He leaves the city in a spirit of mingled bravado and mistrust. The ballad concludes with a complacent confirmation of the superior wisdom and virtue of bush customs and the bush character:

And now while round the shearing floor the listening shearers gape,  
He tells the story o'er and o'er, and brags of his escape.  
"Them barber chaps what keeps a tote, by George, I've had enough,  
One tried to cut my bloomin' throat, but thank the lord it's tough."  
And whether he's believed or not, there's one thing to remark,  
That flowing beards are all the go way up in Ironbark.

An Irish element in the humour here is self evident. Australia owes much to her Irish pioneers, from whom a great part of her sense of fun and also perhaps her poetic temperament derive. Notice also the negative attitude towards the heroic here. Had Bret Harte told that story, honor might have had to be satisfied in another way. There can never in Australia be a parallel with the popular American "wild west" myth, at least not to the trigger-happy aspect of it, because Australians lack the delicately adjusted sense of personal honor which characterizes those *hombres* in the dime novels, and they never carried guns except to massacre kangaroos. (Even today it is not customary for an Australian policeman to be armed, and one of the maxims which timid *mamas* invariably teach their offspring is that they must *never*

point a gun—even a popgun—at papa.) Bush quarrels were invariably settled with fists. In the outback there was certainly a place for heroism, but it was heroism of hard riding, of battles with misfortune—fire, flood, thirst, dust, and all forms of death in the desert—or of faithful companionship. He who comes off best in the legendry of the bush is not the man who draws the quickest and straightest bead—it is rather the buddy (or in Australian terminology, “mate”) who is faithful unto death.

The best of the frontier writers of fiction was Henry Lawson, who excelled in sketches and short stories but had not the kind of literary sophistication which is necessary to write a sustained novel. There is a fight in one of his stories, “Joe Wilson’s Courtship.” The bashful Joe stands up in fiery righteousness to the superior strength of a flashy rival who has spoken slightly of Mary Brand. It is characteristic of Lawson that Joe comes off with a sore head and a sense of failure; and that this leads him to wander off by himself, disconsolate. On his lonely walk by the river he meets the gentle Mary who, surprisingly, is also wandering abroad to enjoy the evening air. And as in the darkness Joe’s disfiguring bruises are invisible, courage returns to him, and Mary’s proximity and tender sympathy do the rest. Sentimental though it is, Lawson’s mood is humane and richly understanding as long as his dramatic framework remains simple—remains, one might say, ballad-like. Nor is sentiment his only string. His stories cover a wide variety of bush scenes and characters, though many of them are sombre. Where his writings are tinged with a melancholy and dissatisfied mood it is due, perhaps, to the very fact that he is a frontier writer. For he is battling against odds for expression.

Unlike Bret Harte or Joaquin Miller, who both blossomed in England, Lawson was a miserable failure in London; he was at home only in Australia. If he had potentialities for literature greater than he actually attained, they were too early thwarted by circumstances for later encouragement to have much effect. He is one of Australia’s greatest writers for all that. He appears most accessibly, though not to greatest advantage perhaps, in the Oxford World’s Classics volume of *Australian Short Stories*—a reasonably good selection and representative enough in other respects. If I had to choose one story to show Lawson at his strongest, I think I should choose “The Union Buries its Dead,”<sup>8</sup> a



grimly satirical sketch set in a small up-country township where an unknown is found drowned in the river, and as from slight evidence he is taken to be a Union man, the local branch of the Union charitably turns out for the funeral. Lawson relates the events with a characteristic warmth of heart, but with many bitter and ironical sidelights, remarking, for instance, upon the delicate feelings of the saloon keeper who for decency's sake closes the doors of his establishment while the procession passes and only admits his customers from the side.

If I aimed to make this in any sense a survey of the whole course of Australian literature's emergence from the "frontier" stage, I should need to embrace a great deal more than there is space to touch on. I set out with no such ambition. But I would like to explain that while the "frontier" idiom has long been superseded, something was achieved by it and remains. Without such a tradition, for example, the contemporary poet David Campbell could scarcely have written his slight but charming lyric *The Stockman*, from which I quote a stanza:

I saw the stockman mount and ride  
Across the mirage on the plain;  
And still that timeless moment brought  
Fresh ripples to my brain:  
It seemed in that distorting air  
I saw his grandson sitting there.

We should never have had Judith Wright's *Bullocky*:

Beside his heavy-shouldered team,  
thirsty with drought and chilled with rain,  
he weathered all the striding years  
till they ran widdershins in his brain . . .

We should not have had the somewhat savage satire of A. D. Hope, turning back to Australia from Europe:

Yet there are some like me turn gladly home  
From the lush jungle of modern thought, to find  
The Arabian desert of the human mind,  
Hoping, if still from the deserts the prophets come,

Such savage and scarlet as no green hills dare  
Springs in that waste, some spirit which escapes  
The learned doubt, the chatter of cultured apes  
Which is called civilisation over there.

Nor should we have had the tender affirmation of that brilliant  
lyrist, James McAuley:

Where once was a sea is now a salty sunken desert,  
A futile heart within a fair periphery;  
The people are hard-eyed, kindly, with nothing inside them,  
The men are independent but you could not call them free.

And I am fitted to that land as the soul is to the body . . .

None of this is "frontier" poetry, but it has the spirit of the frontier in it.

That is what I wanted to show—that we have had our pioneering phase, that it is now over, and that we have profited by it. I would like to conclude by quoting an entire lyric taken from the latest publication of a very remarkable Australian poet, Dame Mary Gilmore. Mary Gilmore is now over ninety; she was born in 1865. She has therefore herself witnessed the progress of Australia from the frontier phase; there is no living Australian, perhaps, who knows so well or enters so deeply into the miracle of that progress. She has always written in an exceedingly simple style, but there are many who think that Australian poetry has achieved nothing in the way of tender, reflective lyric that is more exquisite than what she has written at her best. *Fourteen Men*, the title piece of a volume issued as recently as 1954,<sup>4</sup> is a poem of her old age which recalls a grim experience of her childhood. Perhaps it ought not to be set forth as a representative frontier experience, for what she saw was not of frequent occurrence; but she did see it. Let the poem stand for its truth and its dramatic vividness and because the lines combine in the vision of one person the raw reality of the frontier spirit and the quality which time has since given it as age gives a patina to bronze. This is a modern poem, not a revival:

Fourteen men,  
And each hung down  
Straight as a log  
From his toes to his crown.

Fourteen men,  
Chinamen they were,  
Hanging on the trees  
In their pigtailed hair.

Honest poor men,  
But the diggers said "Nay!"  
So they strung them all up  
On a fine summer's day.

There they were hanging  
As we drove by,  
Grown-ups on the front seat,  
On the back seat I.

That was Lambing Flat,  
And still I can see  
The straight up and down  
Of each on his tree.

The simplicity of this poem is deceptive: its meaning is far more complex than the words. Am I guilty of underlining the obvious if I point out that its style is so severe, so rigidly, even fiercely disciplined, as to amount to a new classicism? But classicism is no frontier method; it is in the highest degree sophisticated. And so with a great deal of contemporary Australian writing, above all Australian poetry which is perhaps the most fully developed of the arts in Australia at present. Look around and you will find the evidence of naïveté in it; it is not all perfect or above criticism. But the best of it is very fine indeed, and if you are generous enough in spirit to judge us by our best, then I have answered the last and most difficult of the questions put to me—Is Australia still a frontier country?

Australia's achievements in literature and the arts are the achievements of a country that is geographically remote and small in numbers—active but still not yet of the first significance in international trade though in many respects (and this is a topic

there has not been time to discuss) in the vanguard of social experiment within the scope of the Western concept of social justice—a free, independent, and also a proud, in many ways a romantic people. She cannot and does not pretend to be a leader in the way America is and must continue to be. But she is in the race. She may touch the tapes, if she does not always expect to win. She has a certain toughness; her frontier years have taught her persistence and endurance. She has good courage, some caution, and high hopes. She is America's friend and neighbour—sharing America's hopes and ideals for the peace, happiness, and advancement of the world. There is a real bond between us.

#### FOOTNOTES

<sup>1</sup>See *Colonial Ballads*, collected by Hugh Anderson (Rams Skull Press, Ferntree Gully, 1955).

<sup>2</sup>See *Australian Bush Ballads*, edited by Douglas Stewart and Nancy Keesing (Angus and Robertson Ltd., Sydney, 1955).

<sup>3</sup>Included in *Henry Lawson: Twenty Short Stories and Seven Poems*, ed. C. Roderick (Angus and Robertson Ltd., Sydney, 1947).

<sup>4</sup>See *Fourteen Men and other Poems, Verses by Mary Gilmore* (Angus and Robertson Ltd., Sydney, 1954).

### OAK MOON

By CLOYD CRISWELL

The moon in the golden tree  
At dusk is hardly a sphere  
Rising as if it would be  
The harvest moon of the year.  
Campus oaks are of the kind  
That, long after frost, will hold  
To leaves as an elder's mind  
Keeps what can never be old.  
Their dark wealth gives when its hue  
Glimmers in the mounting light  
Gold to the gold . . . and the two  
Are fruit on the bough tonight.

## Hollywood hunts the white whale

TYRUS HILLWAY

As this is written, John Huston's long-heralded motion picture classic, *Moby Dick*, starring Gregory Peck and a rubber whale, has recently been revealed before the world at New Bedford, Massachusetts, greatest of American whaling ports in the nineteenth century. True to form, the bobby-soxers of the town largely ignored the whale in a natural preference for Mr. Peck, who is prettier and whom they surrounded in enthusiastic hordes whenever he appeared upon the streets or in a hotel lobby. A public square in the town of New Bedford has been appropriately dedicated to the memory of Herman Melville, original begetter of the movie's plot, which concerns a valiant vendetta between a ship captain and a rogue whale. Having withstood several generations of nearly complete neglect before the twenties, Melville's reputation should prove tough enough to withstand this assault from Hollywood.

My association with the Huston masterpiece goes back to shortly after the publication of the *Moby Dick Centennial Essays* in 1953. In that year Mr. Huston rather cagily admitted an interest in doing a movie based upon Melville's greatest novel. Two previous attempts by Hollywood to convert the book into an acceptable vehicle of public entertainment had been made, and the studios were willing to have both of them forgotten if not forgiven. As a long-time student of Melville's life and works, I recall with a mild shudder the John Barrymore version of a generation ago. In that picture the high point was Barrymore's blood-curdling scream when the stump of his whale-devoured leg was medicinally seared with a hot iron.

And now here was the famous John Huston proposing to do a piece of work which Melville himself might be expected to approve. If he decided to produce the picture, Huston promised, it would be "all Melville." What this meant may not have been exactly clear at that moment, but it sounded like exactly the

thing that Melville enthusiasts had been waiting to hear. No wonder, then, that members of the Melville Society, a group of scholars in America and abroad who were concerned with Melville's writings and reputation, tingled with something approaching excitement at the announcement of Huston's interest and blandly encouraged one another to believe that the most widely known of all American literary classics might at last be about to receive conscientiously fair treatment at the hands of Hollywood. Official notice of the impending event was taken in the Society's quarterly newsletter. As an officer of the Society, I sent off to Huston at his London headquarters a formal but cordial declaration to the effect that various members possessing a vast store of special knowledge were not only available but actually eager to assist in every way possible in bringing technical accuracy and authenticity to the production.

Thus began a correspondence of several months' duration, during the course of which I, along with several other Melville scholars, offered much literary, scientific, and historical information to the producers of the picture. The information had to do with whales, whaling, whaling ships, whaling ports, whaling songs, nineteenth-century history, and interpretations of the plot of Melville's book. The scholars were able to draw upon years of intensive research and offered what was presumably excellent and very reliable advice. Some of this advice was very generously accepted.

Word that Huston was interested in using the technical knowledge which members of the Melville Society were willing to offer came in a letter from London dated 11 February 1954. The stationery was that of the Associated British Picture Corporation Ltd., and the letter was signed by the art director, Mr. W. Ralph Brinton. It asked for photographs and other illustrations of New Bedford circa 1850, showing (a) distant views of the town and harbor, (b) views of the harbor and streets in detail, and (c) the exterior and interior of the Seamen's Tabernacle (better known as the Seamen's Bethel). Reimbursement, of course, was promised for any expenses incurred, including postage.

A digression here is necessary. It is merely to note that, while Melville in his book has the *Pequod* set sail from the predominantly Quaker island of Nantucket, several miles off the main-

land, in the picture the ship leaves instead from New Bedford. Thus there is a slight inaccuracy at the very start. The matter, however, is really of little importance and is mentioned simply for the sake of keeping the record straight. True, one cannot help missing slightly in the picture the admirable "fishy" atmosphere which Melville so powerfully provided in his description of Nantucket. And the Nantucketers themselves, the fathers and greatest experts of the American whaling industry, may possibly feel themselves unjustly done out of their proper place in maritime history by the stern exigencies of practical motion picture-making. If it can be any consolation to them, a few of us will continue to remember the men of Nantucket, in spite of the success with which the film producers have transferred Nantucket's glory entirely to New Bedford, as the rightful conquerors and actual owners (in Melville's day, at least) of the watery "two-thirds of this terraqueous globe." The average movie-goer will not be aware of this, to be sure. He will probably never see Melville's definitive statements on the subject, like the following: "The Nantucketer, he alone resides and riots on the sea; he alone, in Bible language, goes down to it in ships; to and fro ploughing it as his own special plantation." Or this: "All other seamen [have] but a right of way through it." And so on. In the motion picture, not a scene or even the slightest word about Nantucket. It is, however, only a small island with few inhabitants to be offended. And the sin, if it is one, may be excused on the ground that it is actually not one of commission but only of omission.

To return. The international correspondence proceeded smoothly in February with suggestions from me regarding the whaling ship which in the picture would serve as the *Pequod*. I sent photographs and sketches and proposed as the model the *Charles W. Morgan*, a real vessel of Melville's own time, the only whaling ship of the great years of the trade still intact, now permanently imbedded in a cement berth at the remarkable nautical museum in Mystic, Connecticut. I also made a particular point in relation to the ship's figurehead. It would have to be a carved Pequod Indian to justify the vessel's name.

On 23 February Mr. Brinton reported a number of difficulties encountered in the search for a suitable ship. He asked for the name of any Melville scholar who might have made a special study



of the *Pequod*. There are several, including especially Professor Wilson L. Heflin of the United States Naval Academy. The names were sent.

On 11 March Mr. Brinton sent thanks for the drawings and photographs of ships, and revealed that the *Morgan*, with some necessary alterations of detail, would actually be used as the model for a reconstructed whaling ship of the early nineteenth century. One thing still worried the art department, according to Mr. Brinton. This was the unusual character of the *Pequod's* tiller, which Melville indicated had been constructed from the jawbone of a sperm whale. Mr. Brinton wrote at some length and with a touch of bitterness on this matter. To specify a tiller instead of a wheel, and a whalebone tiller at that, seemed to Mr. Brinton like a low blow. With apologies for the lengthiness of his exposition, Mr. Brinton signed farewell; and that was the last heard from him on this side of the Atlantic.

After some brief and inconsequential notes which are not worth mentioning, I was again consulted on a more formal basis—this time by Jeanie Sims, Huston's personal assistant. A letter dated 29 April 1954 (on stationery of the Elstree Pictures Limited) somewhat urgently requested information regarding sailors' hymns, the sea chanties of American sailors, and similar music. Melville included the words of some sailor songs in his book, and in a few cases the original versions have only recently been run down and identified. Besides expressing praise and gratitude for the help which members of the Melville Society had already given, the letter contained one sentence which to any conscientious literary scholar could not be anything but gratifying. That sentence read: "As you know, we are anxious that this production should be as authentic as possible in every detail, and if we could employ these lyrics in their proper setting they would, of course, be a great asset to us in this respect." Authentic in every detail? This was pure music to my ears, as it would be to scholars everywhere. With some haste a number of clues to old whaling songs, especially those familiar to Melville, were dispatched Londonward.

On 12 June appeared a surprise. It was a neat parcel containing (in pink covers) the script prepared by Mr. Ray Bradbury for the projected motion picture. There was also a letter (Sims again) requesting any comments upon the script which I might care to

make. The letter was extremely cordial. In fact, it was a friendly letter and not a business letter. No crass commercial transaction was to be involved in this criticism of the script. The whole matter obviously rested on a very high plane. Mr. Huston wished it known that he sent the script as a gift—with his compliments. He also wanted to make it clear that certain scenes in the script were still to be revised with the object of capturing more closely the spirit of the book as well as correcting one or two points in the light of recent researches.

Here, then, was the real challenge. Actually to have the stuff of the future motion picture in one's hand, to handle it and help form it—this was an opportunity not to be ignored. An implied compliment lay in the fact that one was trusted with a script and allowed to keep it. And the compliment, gentleman to gentleman, became even more meaningful when one considered the fact that no vulgar mention had been made of payment for scholarly services. To work, then, with a will!

The Bradbury script proved highly interesting. To me, indeed, all movie scripts are interesting. To take the point of view of an impersonal camera into whose ken the action swims, to fade in and fade out gracefully (an awesome accomplishment!), to record conversation in a way which will be understood readily by the half-attentive adolescent in the theater audience—these entail techniques of writing which are fascinating in their nature. Mr. Bradbury obviously knew his business. At the same time, it could be noted that he followed Melville's theme and language quite often. True, the sequences of some events had to be transposed and other scenes altered sharply. Such are the exigencies of script-writing. Since *Moby Dick* is a long novel, many things had to be omitted. For example, Fedallah the Parsee and all his dusky followers—of such vital, even indispensable, importance in the book—were wisely ignored in the script. Though they might have been made convincing in a motion picture of the twenties, they could hardly be so at mid-century.

After a careful and, of course, enthralled perusal of the script, I prepared and forwarded a list of a dozen or so corrections which I thought needed to be made. Exactly what they all were can hardly be significant here, but an example will show what they were like. In Sequence C-12 of the script (to pick an example at

random) the young Ishmael, narrator of the story, walks wonderingly among the gravestones of a New Bedford cemetery. There he solemnly gazes at the graves of several sailors who were *lost at sea!* No such incident occurs in Melville's book. Memorial tablets, yes; but grave markers for bodies lying at the bottom of the ocean? The impropriety of establishing and caring for a grave which contains no body seemed patent. I suggested (perhaps rather smugly) that the scene show instead the memorial plaques on the wall of the church which are described at such length and so interestingly by Melville. Using the book as a source rather than the script-writer's imagination would also help to make the picture more nearly "all Melville." While it proved impossible to discover whether this or any other suggestion for the script actually had been adopted until the appearance of the movie itself, at least I felt a momentary sense of satisfaction when the commemorative tablets and not the gravestones were shown on the screen.

At some time during the month of June, 1954, I sent an impolitic, begging letter to Huston's office. I knew that many still photographs of scenes from the picture would be released to the newspapers, magazines, and local theaters to advertise the production. I wondered whether a few of these advertising photographs might not be made available for the files of the Melville Society, which is interested in all things having to do with Melville. The request was a bold one, perhaps. In fact, it proved altogether too bold, and it marks the terminating point of the correspondence.

After perusing avidly the steady stream of publicity releases which poured for several months from Huston's headquarters, I awaited with a feeling somewhere between hope and trepidation the appearance at last of the finished picture. Although I could not attend the première at New Bedford, at which Melville's descendants were guests of honor, I was fortunate enough to attend the first showing in New York City. I was amazed to see in what crashing crowds the advance publicity drew this initial audience to see a picture based upon a novel which most of them had never read. I was a little taken aback, however, to hear on my way out of the theater one lady spectator ask her escort: "Who was Moby Dick—the young man or the old man?"

The picture, like the script, proved highly interesting. Though this correspondent still remains wholly unable to grasp why a bobby-soxer's idol was chosen to play the part of that evil giant, Captain Ahab, he must express whole-hearted admiration for the color photography and for beautiful, sweeping views of the ocean. Minor lapses, like the unconvincing spout of *Moby Dick* (the whale spouts an exhaled mist, not a gushing fountain of water) or the disproportionate size of the whale's eye, did not really spoil my enjoyment of the picture. In fact, my long addiction to western movies made the whole experience pleasant and familiar. One had only to imagine that these whalemens-cowboys were riding horses instead of whales.

To those astute observers who may have wondered why Gregory Peck stalks through this motion picture on the wrong false leg (it should not, of course, be the left leg, but the right one), the explanation probably is quite simple. Huston undoubtedly adopted the widely known Rockwell Kent illustrations in one of the more popular editions of *Moby Dick* as his guide for Captain Ahab's general appearance. Because this artist obviously knew nothing about whaling when he made his drawings, he took off Ahab's *left* leg. Actually it would be impossible for a right-handed man (as Peck is in the film) to throw a harpoon from the bow of a whaleboat if his left leg were an artificial one. The harpooner standing in the bow or front of a whaleboat, which is pitching and rocking precariously beneath him, has difficulty maintaining his position even on two sound legs. Careful balance is necessary not only to remain erect in the boat but also to cast the harpoon accurately into the whale's body. For this reason the old whalemens used a specially constructed clumsy-cleat, which is a thwart in the bow of the boat with a rounded notch cut into the edge on the left side of it, as a brace. With his left knee braced in this notch, the harpooner was aided to stand erect while he plunged his weapon into the plunging whale. Now try to imagine how this could be done with a false left leg.

A more serious flaw, it seems to me, was the handling of Father Mapple's sermon. The imposing figure of Orson Welles, as the New Bedford preacher delivering a sadly abbreviated version of the touching and justly famous nautical sermon on Jonah, struck me as perhaps the most masterful characterization in this

entire masterpiece. Had the script-writer and producer been properly careful to show the really important connection between the sermon and the main outlines of Melville's plot, one might have been more likely to agree in calling this motion picture "all Melville." Unfortunately, the facts of the case would mock one. What Welles declaims has the virtue, if one wishes to be generous in judgment, of providing an impressive interlude. But could it possibly have anything to do with the plot? What could Melville have meant when he introduced the mighty theme of this sermon—that "all the things which God would have us do are hard for us to do" because "in obeying God we deny ourselves?" This is one of the questions which I hope to ask John Huston if the occasion ever presents itself.

Frankly, I fear for the future reputation of Huston's picture. Many persons will say, no doubt, that a plot based upon a primitive and mutually unprofitable vendetta between an intelligent man and a beast of the sea (regardless of what superficial explanation may be provided in Gregory Peck-Ahab's one rather confusing speech on the subject) must be regarded as woefully thin. It stretches belief just slightly. Some people may even call such a plot unfair to the public and, because it seems to cast some doubt upon the quality of Melville's thinking processes, possibly unfair to Melville. And very likely there will be those who ask—since Huston shows Moby Dick near the end of the picture delightedly and with intentional vindictiveness assuming the totally unwhale-like nature of a destroying demon and viciously smashing one by one all the remaining boats, the ship, and even drifting sticks of wood from the wreckage—isn't it unfair to the whale?

## Saturn has the power

SAMUEL YELLEN

What made Dr. Philip Masten halt at the half-open door to his wife's bedroom was the glimpse he caught of Caroline standing next to her bed and gazing with the most intense interest at a small object she was holding in her hand. She was already dressed for an afternoon of bridge with "the girls," a dumpy, lumpy, pouchy, middle-aged woman foolishly decked out in pink chiffon, all ruffles and frills, with the inevitable bit of pink lace peeping archly out of the sagging bosom. Why in the name of Jehoshaphat, he asked himself, did blonde, fair, middle-aged women, and particularly the plumper variety, take to baby pink? You'd suppose that once past their thirties they would put on a simple dark gray or dark blue uniform, preferably an enveloping middy blouse and skirt combination, and decently efface themselves from the public view. Well, his little cabbage was as idiotic as the others, her hair absurdly tinted and frizzled, her pink complexion heightened both by artificial coloring and by her present strange excitement. Indeed, so engrossed was she that she failed to notice his presence in the hallway, even though with his two hundred and twenty pounds he was no elf, and even though she knew that this was the time for him to be leaving on his afternoon round at the hospital. He was about to enter her bedroom to see what that object was, when she spoke and he realized that she was not alone.

"Oh, Arabella, tell me truly, do you really believe this will work?"

Then he heard the soft, yet assured and vibrant, West Indian voice speaking with an agreeable, cultivated British accent: "Of course it's going to work, Mrs. Masten. It cannot fail to work."

"I do hope you're right, Arabella."

"Why, Mrs. Masten, with your own hands didn't you give me the actual hair off his living head and the stockings off his living feet? The top of his crown to the tip of his toe. And last

Saturday long before the sunrise, didn't I get up and pronounce the night spell and burn jimson in the very hour of Saturn? You know Saturn has the power, Mrs. Masten. If Saturn once says No, there is no man alive can expel the toxics from his body. If Saturn once says Yes, there is no man alive can deny your every wish. Oh, Saturn does have the power, Mrs. Masten. You know that."

"Yes, Arabella, I know Saturn has the power."

"So don't you go worrying, Mrs. Masten. I sprinkled the dried lizard blood over the little man. And I cast my stones on the earth, and they figured out to Puer and Rubeus. That's Mars, Mrs. Masten. And he's a power too. The rat eating the infant right out of the cradle, that's Mars, and scaldings and stranglings, and all manner of revenge and all manner of mastery. Oh, I am sure it will do everything needs to be done."

He was familiar enough with the nonsense spoken by Arabella, an arrant hodgepodge of astrology, geomancy, and voodoo. For, to his immense entertainment, she was a frequent caller at his home, as she was at a number of homes in these streets of North Meridian, where the wealthy and successful of Indianapolis lived. She would come up from the Negro warrens off Illinois and Capitol, bringing with her the little black satchel, like a physician's satchel, crammed with charms, fetishes, gaudy feathers, vials of herbs and powders, polished varicolored pebbles, odd bits of glass, and—he wouldn't be surprised—rat tails, lizard skins, toad eyes, and bat wings. He had long been aware, with an ironic tolerance, that his wife consulted her in all solemnity, as did many other weak-minded women in their forties and fifties desperately seeking a cure for the ills of woman for which there is no cure-all—the aches, anxieties, and vapors composing the female jimjams. As for Arabella, he had not been able to make up his mind whether she actually had faith in her hanky-panky or was a clever charlatan. At any rate, her claptrap was no worse than he so often heard from the allergy boys and the other witch doctors in the profession, with their own brand of night spells, houses of the planets, and random casting of stones. Thank God he had gone into surgery. At least, there was no quack-quack as he went in with his scalpel and cut away the rot or patched up whatever was broken or worn out.



Well, hanky-panky or not, he couldn't help wondering what his booby of a wife was up to, and he tapped on the door. Caroline startled, clutched the object in her hand to her side, and turned to him. "Oh, Philip," she cried nervously, "do come in!"

He entered the bedroom, and, as always, found it a foolish room, everywhere flounces and fringes, rosettes and laces, be-ribboned lamp shades in pink satin, little doilies, little fleecy rugs, little silk and velvet pillows. Lord knows he was big and fat enough, but his wife's bedroom made him feel like a hippopotamus in a flower garden. Caroline put on what he recognized as her gracious-hostess face. "Philip darling, surely you remember Arabella."

"Hello, hello, Arabella!" he boomed in the jocose tone he invariably adopted with her. "What will you take for the little black wonder bag? I could use that down at the hospital."

"Good afternoon, Dr. Masten."

There was rebuke in her serious mien, and he regarded her humorously for a moment. Arabella was standing at the foot of the bed, where her open satchel perched like a bloated raven amid the scattering of pillows. A slender woman, nearly as tall as he was, she was dressed in a neatly tailored suit of black worsted, with black lisle hose and black oxfords. Her thin, light mulatto face had regular non-Negroid features, and her straight black hair, striated with gray, was drawn back in a knob at the base of her head. Her air of competence was reinforced by the steel-rimmed glasses through which she returned his gaze calmly and with dignity, affected neither by his professional consequence nor by his imposing bulk. She was a cool customer, trim, efficient, shrewd. What a foil for his fluffy, twittering, essentially silly wife! No doubt that Arabella, aside from her color, was an uncommon woman. And yet, you couldn't get away from that fantastic little satchel of hers.

"Well, doctor," he boomed again in the same jocose tone, "and how is our patient today?"

Her clear, dark brown eyes looked steadily into his. "Dr. Masten, you know I am not a doctor." Then she bent to her satchel and began to arrange the things in it.

Dr. Masten raised his eyebrows quizzically, shrugged his thick shoulders, and turned back to his wife. "As I was passing your

door, my dear, I couldn't help seeing that you were holding something, and it made me curious."

Caroline tightened her hand around the mysterious object. And from the flush in her cheeks and the evident effort she was making to look him directly in the eye, he needed no lie detector to tell him she was about to lie to him. "Why, it's nothing at all, Philip, nothing but an old crumpled handkerchief. I'd better get a fresh one before I go out this afternoon." With amusement, he watched her performance as she walked to her dresser, taking the tiny steps in keeping with her image of herself as a slim, graceful, light-footed little lady. She pulled open one of the top drawers, hid there with an awkward piece of legerdemain whatever she had in her hand, brought out a dainty white handkerchief in a pink floral print, and shut the drawer again. Then pirouetting with her dumpy body and holding the fresh handkerchief against her dress, she asked gaily, "Don't you think this goes well?"

Dr. Masten laughed aloud, but said nothing, although as a rule he couldn't resist the temptation to josh Caroline, who was one of those women absolutely without humor. Oh, she often laughed. But her laugh, he had finally learned, had no relation to humor and almost never expressed pleasure; it was rather a polite noise demanded on certain occasions by her notions of etiquette, somewhat like the *Ha ha* which used to be printed in the dialogue of novels and plays. Caroline was returning his look with apprehensive defiance, her small rouged mouth quivering, her inadequate nose and shallow blue eyes set in the blob of a face underneath the wig-like frizzle of bleached hair. He well knew how she shrank from his jokes; and now the stress of sustaining the clumsy lie made her whole head tremble slightly, as if with incipient palsy. Why in the name of Methuselah, he wondered, did women prefer to lie, forever playing some ludicrous role, or working towards some devious and trivial end?

While he stood there in silence, fixing his wife with a sardonic smile, Arabella looked on quietly, making no pretext to break the scene, no movement to cover up embarrassment. But at last, as though deciding that the pose of the living picture had been held long enough, she snapped her satchel shut and said, "Mrs.

Masten, I must be going along. I have several other ladies to visit this afternoon."

Caroline accepted the little rescue maneuver with relief. "Could you stay just a minute longer, Arabella? There's something else I wanted to ask you about."

Again Dr. Masten laughed aloud and permitted his mocking gaze to travel from his wife to Arabella and then back to his wife. Finally he said, "Well, don't trump your partner's ace, my dear. I must be off to the hospital. Unless Arabella would care to take over my round this afternoon." And he walked out. That curious object would wait.

By the time he had finished his afternoon round at the hospital, Dr. Masten had to acknowledge to himself that his curiosity had been thoroughly aroused. Not even the bustle of the emergency blood transfusion had completely extinguished the tick in his brain. But he was by no means an impatient man. On the contrary, thirty years at the operating table had taught him the extremity of patience, and it was that quality, as much as his deft hands, which had made him the man to whom brain cases were brought from as far south as Evansville and as far north as Rensselaer and Fort Wayne. Yes, in a game of poker he could outwait any player. He was never to be hurried, and on this afternoon he cut nothing short. Besides, he enjoyed the afternoon round, enjoyed it nearly as much as the morning excitement of the operating room, where his dexterity and cunning flirted with mischance and death. After the morning's high pitch, the afternoon was a kind of relaxation. Lumbering through the corridors from patient to patient, with the deferential nurses, internes, and family doctors in tow, he could take pleasure in his handiwork and in his consciousness of power. Maybe, as Arabella said, Saturn and Mars *were* powers. But he was a power too, and the afternoon genuflected to him. Nevertheless, he admitted to a degree of fever to get home and see what those other powers called upon by his wife might be up to.

As he drove almost automatically along the streets leading east and north to his home, it struck him that familiar as every leaf of his little cabbage was to him, she was yet able to mystify him with her preposterous delusions. Mahalaleel! The delusions man could most ingeniously and elaborately construct to conceal

or distort the plain, hard, obvious, inescapable fact! That was the great mystery of life. *And* the great joke. All the world's not a stage, but a madhouse. And observing the antics of its inmates, he had often speculated on where their delusions sprang from. The medieval physicians had conceived of a fantasy cell located in the fore part of the brain. But he had laid bare thousands of brains, and in autopsies had sliced up hundreds more, and had found nothing beyond an intricate switchboard of wires and connections, electrical charges and currents. Cut into any part, and he could predict with precision which set of muscles or which organ would go out as if a fuse had blown. While it was all complicated enough to stagger the mind, it was nonetheless orderly and definite. No, there was nothing left over, no increment to account for delusions.

And he wasn't thinking only of the monstrous delusions of insanity, where a man persuaded himself that he had grown feathers or that his head had turned into an egg or that he was St. Francis talking to the birds. What intrigued him even more were the equally incredible "ordinary" delusions, delusions of beauty, self-importance, personal charm, intellectual superiority, yes, and humility and charity, to which successful appeals were made every minute of every day. Take this very city of Indianapolis, flat and straight, its principal streets radiating like spokes from the hub of Monument Circle. What did you find behind the sensible geometric plan? Why, Arabella and her little black satchel. The gypsy fortunetellers flourishing in every neighborhood. The daily horoscope printed in the newspapers and the horoscope magazines piled up on the newsstands. The revivalists each month announcing the end of the world. And that prosperous healer, the one recently prosecuted by the county medical association, who cured every kind of disease by sending out wave lengths from a radio-like box of dials and tubes, and who was able to produce patients eager to swear in the courtroom that he had cured them. And very likely he *had*! That was the greatest joke of all. How could anyone doubt the miracles attributed to the saints—eyesight restored, fits ended, the lame and the halt stacking up their crutches at the shrines? There was, after all, no limit to how much a man could and would kid himself. For a lover of fact,

that was also a species of fact. A great big fat comic scream of a fact.

Well, here he was at the home which reflected his own delusions of social grandeur and family antiquity. Pulling into the garage which was a small replica of the Tudor-style house set well back on a spacious lawn, he saw that his wife's car wasn't in yet, and he went directly up to her bedroom. Finding the curious object was even easier than he had expected. He went first to the very drawer where he had seen Caroline put it, and there it still was, ineptly hidden among the handkerchiefs, neck scarfs, and clusters of artificial flowers. Probably, in her confusion and haste, she had forgot to hide it elsewhere. When he lifted out the object and got a good look at it, he had to laugh. It was an effigy, like a rag doll the size of a fist, made mainly of a rolled-up sock, with a round piece of white celluloid painted for a face, and meant, unmistakably meant, to be Dr. Philip Masten, the eminent surgeon. Ah, that Arabella! Of course, the likeness was crude, yet by a few master strokes she had managed to take him off—the thick tangle of reddish-brown hair, the big fleshy face with the big fleshy nose, the huge belly hanging over the belt, the bulging thighs and arms, even the stoop of the massive shoulders begotten by years of bending over the operating table. It was him all right, the top of his crown to the tip of his toe. And somehow it even suggested something of his temper, his scoffing skeptical look, his readiness to break out in a boisterous guffaw.

Turning the little figure around in his hand to study it, he wondered what the purpose behind it might be. Could it possibly be that his poor silly Caroline wished at this eleventh hour to stir up a romantic passion in his wheezing fifty-eight-year-old heart? The thought appeared absurd. And yet, what had Arabella said? If Saturn once says Yes, there is no man alive that can deny your every wish. His wife's "Philip darling" he had dismissed as a mechanical expression from which all feeling and meaning had long since drained away. He had never credited her with the shifts of tone underlying his own "my dear," shifts of tone out of which could be written the history of their marriage—the overpowering desire for her young body, the tenderness when she gave birth to their two children, the contempt at discovering her stupidity, the indifference when she had lost her physical attractiveness.

Might it be that her "Philip darling" had over the years expressed similar tonal values to which he had grown deaf? The question offered food for entertainment. But, sentiment aside, there were the hard facts of physiology. She had simply outlived her biological function, and the children, pledges of the original union, had in their turn married and departed to live one in Seattle, the other in Dallas. And emptied of her sexual distinction, she had settled into a domestic convenience, serving as well as another to take care of his home, to see that he was fed, to make the required appearances with him in society, and to prevent the large Tudor-style house from seeming vacant.

The image of his wife's puffy pinkish face rose before his eyes, and for a moment he observed it with mixed amusement and pity. Then focusing through the image, he became aware of a shining black spot, and realized that there was something on the belly of the little effigy he was holding. At first glance he took it to be the representation of a button or buckle. But when he looked more closely, he saw that it was a piece of carving. He walked over to the window to get the late afternoon light. His eyes were still good, and a careful examination showed him a minuscule toad fashioned out of a globule of onyx no bigger than a pea. Whoever had carved those legs bent and drawn up under the body and that head with the topaz specks for eyes was the kind of genius that could engrave an entire verse of the Bible on the head of a pin. He was prompted to pull at the toad, and it came away, followed by the long straight shaft of a pin to which it served as head. "Mahalaleel!" he exclaimed. And then he burst into laughter at the—what was it the psychiatry boys called it—the construct, the sentimental construct, his own fantasy cell had built. A pin, a long straight shaft of a pin with an onyx toad for a head, stuck all the way into his fat juicy belly! Well, that was better, that was much much better.

At that moment he heard his wife's car coming up the driveway to the garage. He pushed the pin back into the belly of the effigy, and as he did so, felt his own mortal belly wince involuntarily. "Mahalaleel!" he exclaimed again. "I'll be good and goddamned!" There was a broad smile on his face as he returned to the dresser, put the effigy back in the drawer, and started downstairs to meet his little cabbage with new interest, with even a touch of respect.



Vastly diverted by the piece of black magic so secretly set to work against him, he stood waiting for Caroline in the elegant walnut-paneled room which she spoke of as "the library." When she came in, he was still smiling broadly, and she asked cheerfully, "Did everything go all right this afternoon?" Then with fluttery movements, she took off her white gloves and powder blue spring coat and hat, while he looked on, thinking of how that pudgy ineffectual woman in the ill-advised pink chiffon whom he had laughed at for so many years had bamboozled him. He tried to picture her in the act of sticking that long pin into the belly of the effigy—his own booby of a wife, who considered the very word "belly" vulgar, and said "stomach" instead. Or had she squeamishly stood by and permitted Arabella to do that nasty little business for her? And if she herself had pushed in the pin, what had been the expression on her face at the time? A momentary spasm of childish rage? Cruel malevolence? Cold hatred suppressed over the years? Fiendish chortling joy? Or merely this same silly puffy mask? He shook his head in disbelief and his smile broadened even more. She replied with what he recognized as her Mona Lisa smile. "You *are* in a good mood, Philip darling."

"My dear," he said jovially, "you take the prize."

For a moment she looked puzzled, and then appeared to understand his exclamation as a question. "The prize? No, I didn't, Philip."

He burst into laughter, and was inspired to go on with the farcical misunderstanding. "If you don't take the prize, my dear, I don't know who does!"

Again a perplexed look passed over her face before she answered. "Why, it was Lucille Hapgood. I *might* have had a chance if Beatrice—you know, Beatrice Norman—hadn't misled me with a two-heart opener. I ought to know by now that you can't trust the way she bids."

He studied his wife with a kind of wonder. Why, if he had not himself only a short while ago held in his own hands that effigy which she had hidden in her drawer! Once more he burst into laughter.

"Philip, I wish you wouldn't laugh at me that way."

Perhaps because of her reprimanding tone, the impulse came to him to see just how far he could push her in this farce. And



suddenly he doubled up in a travesty of agony, screwed up his face, and gave a grotesque groan.

"What is it, Philip darling?" she cried.

"Oh," he groaned again. "Oh! A pain! A shooting pain! Right here!" With both hands he grabbed at his paunch in a melodramatic gesture.

"Maybe it's a stomach upset, Philip. Can I get you some baking soda?"

He knew that his great bulk twisted like a gargoyle must have made a bizarre sight in the elegantly paneled and furnished library, and even his little cabbage, he felt sure, could not misread the mockery in his eyes as he gazed up at her from his contorted position. "It feels as if somebody ran a long pin all the way into my belly." He watched the solicitude on her face change to a frown.

"I do hope this isn't one of your vulgar jokes, Philip."

He straightened up. "No, one of yours, my dear." And he chuckled.

The next day, a Thursday, as he was about to start off for his afternoon round, he again came upon Arabella in his wife's bedroom, dressed in the same neat black suit and accompanied by her black omen of a satchel. The picture of the two women, so unlike in appearance and manner, conversing earnestly in low voices, the frizzled blonde head and the smooth black head plotting so childishly against him, was he said to himself, better than a Broadway show. "Well, doctor," he boomed, "what's the prognosis today?"

"Good afternoon, Dr. Masten."

Her reply was another rebuke, and he was tickled by those clear, dark brown eyes gazing placidly at him through the steel-rimmed glasses, as if completely innocent of all the abracadabra and the sticking of pins into the effigy. He grinned knowingly at her, and then at his wife. He was enjoying himself thoroughly, and he went off to the hospital full of curiosity as to what the next crazy step in the machinations of those two women would be. Like a split person, he was leading two lives, his customary respectable self, operating rationally in the morning, visiting patients in the after-

noon, and driving along the familiar streets of Indianapolis; his other self, identified with the effigy, suffering indignities and torments at the hands of the two women. And during the round at the hospital, he diverted himself by thinking up new agonized ways of groaning and of contorting his body.

When he returned home late that afternoon, he found an opportunity to steal into his wife's bedroom for another examination of the effigy. The toad was still fastened to the belly. But now there was a second pin, stuck through both legs. It too bore a globule of onyx, this one carved with delicate skill into a coiled snake, its head lifted as if ready to strike, and with sapphire specks for its eyes. After inspecting and admiring the snake for some time, he replaced the effigy in the drawer. And that evening he put on another burlesque performance. He hobbled into the dining room, dragging his feet as in anguish and groaning most elaborately. While Caroline observed his behavior with a perplexed frown, he gasped out to her, "Terrible pains in the legs, my dear! As if somebody stabbed them with a long needle." He made the performance as extravagant as he could to see if she wouldn't betray some consciousness of the effigy. However, she let on to nothing, except that she did give him an odd look before she asked, "Are you joking again, Philip?"

Thus the farce went on. Friday afternoon, when he was about to go off to the hospital, Arabella was already leaving, and he overheard her downstairs at the front door: "Tomorrow is going to be the day, Mrs. Marsten. It's Saturn's day, you know. And he governs that day from the very first hour of dawn."

"But Arabella," he heard Caroline complain, "he only makes vulgar jokes about it all."

"The man jests in vain, Mrs. Marsten," Arabella reassured her. "There is no man alive can jest with Saturn with impunity."

And late that afternoon, paying his stealthy visit to his wife's bedroom as soon as he could manage, he discovered that a new pin had joined the company of the toad and the snake. This was stuck through the head of the effigy, from temple to temple, and the onyx globule was carved into a spider, its legs curled inward to grasp the shaft, and with emerald specks for eyes. "Jehoshapat"

he said. "I'm beginning to look like a goddamned pincushion." That evening, sitting at the dinner table, so properly set with crystal, sterling, and Wedgwood, he put on a particularly outlandish performance, groaning and moaning, seizing his head in his hands and rocking it from side to side while he croaked, "A splitting headache, my dear! As if somebody drove a nail right into my temple!"

"I do wish you wouldn't make these coarse jokes, Philip."

And lying in bed that night, he chuckled to himself at the thought of those two fantastic women. He was eager to see what Saturn's day had in store for him, and he was quite ready to match powers with Saturn. Above all, he was intrigued by what Arabella and his wife were going to do when their delusion about Saturn's power proved empty, when nothing at last came from all their hocus-pocus. They would be like those fanatics waiting for the end of the world, selling all their possessions, hanging on past the prophesied annihilating moment, and then sheepishly having to start all over again.

What he found upon coming home from the hospital Saturday afternoon did give him something of a start. A new and longer pin was thrust right through the heart of the effigy and, sticking out a good inch behind, looked especially murderous. It bore a head about four or five times the size of the others, made not of onyx but of some metal painted a phosphorescent green, and carved or cast into a vampire bat with outspread wings and ruby eyes. The head of the bat was bent so that it appeared to be sucking at the heart of the effigy. The effect was macabre, and for once he was disconcerted. Could his poor silly Caroline mean this? Did she really wish him ill? Or was she indulging in one of her fantasies outside the realm of reality, playing a game not for keeps? Somewhat subdued by the thought of all the hatred that evidently had accumulated in his wife over the years, he laid the effigy back in the drawer. And that evening he put on no performance, but sat down quietly to dinner and made the usual talk about the activities of the day. He thought that he detected Caroline glancing at him once or twice expectantly, but he couldn't

be sure. And he smiled at how childishly disappointed she was going to be when Saturn's day was harmlessly gone.

It was about an hour after dinner, as they were sitting in the library, where she had brought her knitting and he the evening paper, that he felt a sudden burning pain shoot from his abdomen up into his throat. At first he tried to dismiss it, wondering if it weren't auto-suggestion resulting from all his vivid play-acting of the previous evenings. But then there could be no doubt. A gripping spasm seized him, so that he groaned involuntarily and doubled up in his armchair. He looked startled at Caroline, and was certain that he caught a flash of interest in her eyes before the mask settled over her face. Through the wave of pain, he thought, Why, they must have used arsenic trioxide! The white tasteless powder would have mixed easily with the sugar in his coffee. That must have been it—the classic agent for revenging domestic wrongs. As for motive, who didn't have a motive? It was as simple as that. And all the time, having this in mind, they had deliberately directed his attention to the effigy. The mumbo-jumbo was merely what the military boys called a cover plan. He was reduced to saying to himself, "Well, what do you know! What do you know!"

As another seizure came upon him, he got to his feet and staggered against the heavy walnut library table, his great bulk jarring it out of place. "My dear," he said, and then doubled up again.

She had put aside her knitting and was watching him with a frown. "Is this your joke again, Philip?"

He managed to gasp, "No joke, no joke." And then he laughed through the horrible pain. He knew that it must have made an inhuman sound. But imagine his booby of a wife maneuvering him into betting a lousy little pair into her full house. As he staggered towards the door, she got up from her chair and followed him. "Are you really in pain, Philip darling?" she asked in what seemed a solicitous voice.

He looked square into her face, but he could no longer read it. He had lost the key. Or, more likely, he had never had it. If she didn't feel the concern she expressed, then his little cabbage was diabolical. He tried to laugh, but another wave of pain came over him. A clammy sweat broke out on his skin. What was it

Arabella had said? If Saturn once says No, there is no man alive can expel the toxics from his body. Well, Dr. Philip Masten had some power himself, and he'd just see what a stomach tube and an emetic would do. He felt sure he could still make it all right.

"Can I get you something, Philip?"

Caroline was standing behind him, her dumpy body in an attitude of concern, an anxious look on her puffy face. Or was there a flicker of triumph in those shallow blue eyes? For a moment he considered asking her to bring him some raw eggs and milk. But then he kept silent, wondering whether the two women had planned that far ahead. He could no longer be sure from his wife's face. Well, he knew he'd find something in his medicine chest. The question that nagged him was, Which one, Arabella or Caroline, had got the idea of giving Saturn's power a booster with a little arsenic? Or had the two of them worked it out together? He laughed again, coughing and choking. Yes, it might even have been Caroline acting all on her own. They had him all right. Well, if he pulled through, the next move would certainly be up to him. As another spasm of pain seized him, he staggered and stumbled out of the door towards his bathroom.

## FEBRUARY

By REEVE SPENCER KELLEY

Now the forlorn month, February,  
The sad, second child of the new year, clothed  
In ragged snow and unkept clouds;  
Austerities of slush stretching,  
Under the numb trees, to the stained lions.  
Month between seasons, the coming down  
Of smoke, under the burthensome mists,  
And the bending down of men,  
Too long on a diet of unnourishing days,  
Gruel-thin morning, Acherontic and flat,  
To sleet-diluted afternoons,  
The folded paper and the folded sky  
All of a shade of black and gray,  
And pigeons, at the curbing, dowdy as whores.

## Letters from Burma

ZENA HUNTER

1896

Jean Wilson was twenty-three years old when she traveled half way around the world to be married—nine miles by buggy from West Hebron, N. Y., to the nearest railway station; a day's journey by train to New York; nine days by Cunard steamer to Liverpool; and six weeks by the Paddy Henderson Line to Rangoon. She had met James Hunter while visiting relatives in Dundee, Scotland, and for six weeks had his companionship, until he left Scotland to begin his work as foreman coppersmith in Dalla Dockyard, across the river from Rangoon. For three years, they had exchanged letters, each of which took more than two months to travel the distance. Then came the silk for her wedding dress, each length folded inside a newspaper, and finally the steamship tickets.

My mother told hundreds of tales about the next sixteen years of her life in Burma, but she never put into words the things that were in her mind and her heart that day in October of 1896, when she looked over the muddy flood waters of the Irrawaddy River to the teeming strangeness that lay between the deck of the steamer and the distant golden umbrella of the Shwe Dagon pagoda. As the steamer eased into the dock and she tried to recognize the tall, black-haired Scot whom she had come to marry, the memory of the shocked faces of the West Hebron folk flooded through her mind “—and him a total stranger, and not even a missionary!” I think the panic rising in her throat must have been choking her when he came up the deck behind her and said, “Good morning, Miss Wilson,” as calmly as if this were the Fairmuir Road in Dundee and they had parted only yesterday.

She stayed that night at the home of the Dockyard Superintendent and his wife. In the morning, my mother and father were married in the Scots Kirk of Rangoon and, after the reception, crossed the river in a sampan to the dockyard bungalow that was home for the next sixteen years. The two boys and I were born there, but each boy, when he reached school age, had to be sent to New York to the grandparents. When I was four years old, Mother and Father came back to the West for good, but they brought with them a lifetime full of memories and my brothers and I and all our friends knew the stories of tigers in the hill station and cobras in the compound at Dalla, of

pagodas and plays that lasted all night long, of travels by bullock cart or pony back. My own very first memory is of sitting on the banks of Dalla Creek and watching the elephants at work loading lumber in the lumberyard across the creek.

1955

In June, 1955, I traveled to Burma by plane—overnight flights to Honolulu, to Tokyo, and then short hops to Hong Kong, Bangkok, and Rangoon—in less than a week.

From Rangoon, I went on up to Mandalay to spend nine months as a Fulbright lecturer in geology at University College. My assignment was to teach courses, organize laboratories, and establish a geologic museum. Part of the things I did—and part of the things I thought—went into letters, from which these selections came.

#### Rangoon, June 26

I am so "oriented" that I am completely disorganized! On Monday, we were met at the airport by U Htun Myaing, Assistant Executive Officer of the U.S. Educational Foundation in Burma. Tuesday morning we had an interview with U Cho, Executive Officer. Wednesday evening we had dinner at the Burma-America Institute and met Mr. Cassidy, Director; we ate Chinese food with a china spoon (I cannot handle chopsticks) and tried to talk slow, clear English to Mrs. Tin Wah, while the din of fifty other people doing the same kind of thing deafened all of us; we were entertained by the movie "Ivanhoe," which broke down four times and which had a sound track that was loud and unintelligible even to American ears. Thursday morning we interviewed Mr. Landrey, Cultural Attaché of the Embassy and therefore member of the U.S. Educational Foundation in Burma board. He gave us a pep talk on Burma and our attitudes. I also had a conference with Dr. Tha Hla, head of the geology department at Rangoon University and therefore my boss by remote control; he sets syllabus and exams in geology for Mandalay as well as for Rangoon. Friday I went back and had another and less formal two hours with him and like him. He is arbitrary and autocratic as a crowned king, but he gets things done: has *fifty* petrographic microscopes for his department of twenty Seniors, twenty-five Juniors, and fifty Sophomores, and is getting more. Dr. Tha Hla is a hardrock man whose degree is from London.



Friday afternoon all of us "grantees" were given an orientation program. Edith Betts, from the University of Idaho, will teach physical education for women at Mandalay State Teachers' College. Mr. Shontz, from Pittsburgh, will teach science in Taunggyi High School. Mr. Price, from Virginia, will teach agricultural subjects at the high school in Kalaw, where all the students are currently on strike. Dr. Marsaglia, originally from Denver, will lecture on statistics at Rangoon University; his wife is from Montana. Mr. and Mrs. James are a colored family from Washington, D.C.; he will teach commercial subjects in a high school in Rangoon, and Mrs. James will teach English part-time at the Burma-America Institute classes. Miss Gemmell, librarian from Virginia, is already in Mandalay. She will be librarian at University College and will be my housemate. The orientation program involved greetings from all the men we had talked to before; a film strip on Burmese life and commentary by Mr. Cassidy; a sheaf of literature to peruse (I now have a suitcase full of instructions, briefing, etc.); a fiery, hour-long summary of Burmese history by a roly-poly, peppy little woman, Daw Mya Sein, lecturer in history at Rangoon University, a burning patriot and therefore sold on her subject and interesting; then tea and cookies—and home to bathe and change clothes and go to Stepaneks for another Chinese dinner and a different kind of orientation.

Stepaneks were University of Colorado people. Joe is on a two-year assignment with the U. N. Technical Assistance organization helping the Burmese spend Japanese reparations money on industrialization projects. They were entertaining a group of Embassy and other advisory organization people, who gave us the unofficial American-in-Burma viewpoint. There are more darn organizations of people here to tell the Burmese what to do and how to do it, but I guess the Burmese just "gang their ain gait" anyway. One specialist in Chinese affairs thought he spent 99% of his time on local officials and had not yet found out what Chinese affairs there are. Another specialist is an economist, here under a U. N. program. From New York, he knows the answers to *everything* and what he doesn't know he talks about anyway. A young and disgruntled Italian man is here as an expert on rice milling. A Brazilian, here as U.N. advisor to the Bureau of Mines, finds it rather difficult to interest foreign capital in re-opening the tungsten, tin,

and silver operations when the Burmese government may nationalize them at any time and will not give more than a ten-year lease. My hosts, however, and some of the other folks are the kind of Americans it is good to meet abroad, for they face the difficulties without becoming cynically critical, and they do concrete things to overcome the difficulties as effectively as possible.

Saturday morning, we went en masse to the Shwe Dagon pagoda for a tour. It had poured pitchforks and hammer handles, and drizzled while we were there. Since one must shed shoes on the outer periphery, I did not know whether to regret the puddles and mud underfoot or be grateful for water to paddle in. Shoes must come off, but dogs still wander all over, betel-nut spitters have no out-of-bounds areas, general debris from the stalls along the stairways accumulates, and my squeamish stomach fought all morning with my architectural, aesthetic, and cultural interests in the pagoda. Some of the pagoda is gorgeous and all of it is fascinating; details of carving or brass-work are delightful; the pageantry is thrilling; but decay is rapid. It is difficult to keep the tremendous jumble of shrines, small temples, buddhas, and wishing bells all covered with gold leaf, and there are some appallingly shoddy phenomena. Cases of holy relics and gifts have everything from a solid silver, beautifully-carved bowl to a 5-and-10 glass vase to a long hank of somebody's hair, and a big silver vase that is a real museum gem may be filled with dilapidated old paper flowers. U Ohn Han, a very respectable Burmese businessman and lay-member of the pagoda staff, wore a handsome stiff-silk longyi (skirt) and a silk jacket, but his little personal shrine needs house-cleaning and, right alongside it, a tree he planted fifteen years ago has a tiny shrine and offerings to the tree-spirit that may haunt it. I try hard to watch where my feet go, and watch a family pouring buckets of water over a small buddha; to keep my mind off the horrible possibilities underfoot and keep it on the lovely little Burmese girl who is filling vases with roses and dahlias and jasmine, as her brothers wield the water bucket, and the kneeling mother and tiny top-knotted sister touch forehead and hands to the ground just out of range of the dousing.

Saturday afternoon, Edith and I were invited to tea across the street at Daw Thin Kyi's (pronounced Thingee). Lecturer in geography at Rangoon University, Daw Thin Kyi is a brilliant

woman, chubby and cross-eyed, friendly and informal, and a completely delightful hostess. She had invited the wife of Dr. Tha Hla, who is an Englishwoman; the wife of U Tin Ton, who is a Syracuse girl; Daw Mya Tun, wife of the head of the history department, mother of nine children, and lecturer in education at the University; the wife of the Baptist minister on campus; and the wife of the Y.M.C.A. secretary, all of whom are Americans. The tea lasted, at the table, from four o'clock until six o'clock, and involved a terrific amount of either very peppery or very sweet Indian items. It was anything but formal—everybody reached in all directions—and we felt like home folks.

Saturday night, U Cho and his wife entertained us and all the brass—both Burmese and Embassy, including Ambassador Satterthwaite (whom one of the Burmese ladies thought to be Ambassador Sit-and-Wait)—at a buffet supper: Burmese food for the first time since we came. Everybody was being very jolly, introductions were vague, and it was late in the evening before I discovered that my pal was wife of the acting president of Rangoon University.

This Sunday morning, letter-writing has been interrupted by an enterprising young Burman aged twelve. He smilingly presented himself at our garden door and wanted to know if we wished to look at Burmese water-color pictures, and ended by selling Edith ninety kyats ("chats") worth (eighteen dollars) of pictures *and* framing—his father is a picture framer! Very shortly, we will go for mid-day dinner with the Chu family, whose son is at Colorado School of Mines. The children speak English, but Mrs. Chu does not, and my Burmese is limited to counting to ten, so conversation may be difficult, but they were most kind to invite us.

Our garden is part of the time a lake, for this is the rainy season, and rain comes spasmodically in deluges that are terrific. Our lawn mower is a man who sits on his heels and swings at the coarse field grass with a long, wicked-looking flat blade—back-handed. There are three discouraged-looking banana trees, a frame of red and white roses across the back of the garden, a few cannas. Weaver birds have nests hanging from the eaves—foot-long cones suspended from a pointed apex and entered from a perfect circle of woven grass at the base. They are rowdy things—as a

matter of fact, mornings around 5 a.m. are apt to be a perfect "cacophony of sound"—weaver birds, crows, sparrows; yelping pye dogs that sound as if they were being torn limb from limb when they are probably only nipped by a flea; the night-watchmen clanging gongs to show they are still on duty (since each man whangs a gong every hour all night, the *nights* are not too quiet); student radios (we are near the men's dorm) beginning; a thundering deluge of rain; the clip-clop of wooden sandals of Indian servants hurrying by to the bazaar; the chk-chk of an indignant lizard scuttling across the wall—and the buzz of a stray mosquito inside the mosquito net.

Those pye dogs are a blight—all mongrels and all looking exactly alike except for color variations—first time I have ever encountered pure-bred mongrels! Most of them, except for an overcoat of fleas, do pretty well, for the garbage is not just thrown out helter-skelter but is piled in heaps at fairly regular intervals along the roads. Nobody will kill anything, for the Burmese are Buddhist and most of the Indians Hindu, and the ancient and diseased pye dogs are horrible and too common.

#### Mandalay, July 3

Edith Betts and I came up by plane on Tuesday—and the airport bus drove us right past the plane that overshot the landing strip the week before and stripped wings and engine! Our flight, however, was an uneventful jogging along over a monsoon cloud blanket that broke here and there to show first rice paddies, then unbroken forest, then hogback ridges, then red and yellow fields and scattered palms. The skies cleared near Mandalay and we had a perfect view of Mandalay's one hill, and the Palace moat and wall, and the thousands of little pagodas, but we got no further than taking out our cameras when the steward told us firmly that picture-taking was forbidden—there are military installations. It is the most interesting approach, though, of any since Hong Kong, and the plane settled down beside the three basha huts (woven bamboo) that constitute the Mandalay airport, though there is a control tower, one story higher than the huts and of decomposing stucco. But it *does* look good to see the hills against the skyline. They confuse me because they are on the east instead of my accustomed west, but they are good, green,

sharp mountains rising an abrupt 3000 to 5000 feet above our river plain, and when I look out from the bedroom balcony over the yellow pom-pomed acacia trees and the neighbor's flame-colored poinsettia tree and see the lights and shadows on the hills, I'm thankful to the Providence that put me here and not in Rangoon.

Mandalay gets only thirty inches of rain a year in contrast to Rangoon's one hundred inches, and the rains have not yet come to Mandalay—only occasional showers and afternoon cloudiness. It is hot, but dry, and keeps me perspiring much of the time, but not nearly as uncomfortable as in the Philadelphia area in July. The wind blows all the time. Last night's warm gale almost blew me and my cocoon wrappings of mosquito net right out the door, but most of the time it blows just gently and steadily—enough to keep the dry limy dust moving into every crack and my hair looking perpetually like a floor mop.

Tyler Gemmel and I share this house on the University College "estate" (campus). Tyler was sent out here ostensibly to teach a library-science class, for there are four trained Burmese librarians in all of Burma. But the socialist government has not set a wage scale for librarians, so no one wants to study library-science, no class is organized, and she has been drafted to replace the "librarian," who was a philosophy lecturer cataloguing library volumes in his spare time. Her staff includes one trained English-speaking Indian girl clerk, a Burmese bookbinder, two Burmese clerks who do not speak English, and two peons (pronounced punes) who open the locked cases and stand by with watchful eye while faculty members select books.

We now have the full complement of staff and things are beginning to function smoothly. Upendra Lal, the cook, is Indian, speaks fifty per cent understandable English, and is effective and a good cook. Maung Nyi, the bearer, is Burmese. He airs the bedding daily, makes beds, lowers and raises mosquito nets, dusts and polishes furniture, waits on table, carries messages and goes on miscellaneous errands, and accompanies us as a dubious interpreter at the bazaar. The sweeper, Indian (and his wife unofficially), cleans the bathrooms, and does the washing and waxing of floors. We decided that we needed a night watchman, so the cook's son, Maung Ko, naps on our front door step from 6:00 p.m. to 6:00 a.m., walks around the house occasionally, is on hand to

let us in when we come home late, and every hour he clangs a metal rod against another one to let us know he is on the job. His first few nights, he surely was enthusiastic about that clanging. For an hour in the morning, he also acts as gardener. There is no water for lawns, the climate is hot and dry, the ground is rock-solid, and gardens as we know them are nonexistent. But our compound was just a vacant weed-lot, and aside from looking like shanty-people, it brought possible snakes too close to the house for comfort, so the boy is "mowing" the grass. It is harsh treatment, for he simply attacks the ground with a big mattock and hacks out everything—but bare ground is preferable to knee-high weeds.

Being in Mandalay is like being shut into the pages of a National Geographic Magazine. Mandalay has a population of 180,000, was from 1835 until about 1885 the Royal residence and seat of government, and is Burma's second city. But the government is in Rangoon; the palace was completely destroyed by bombing during the war; most of Mandalay burned at the same time; very few westerners are here; and the "city" is simply a small town—an oriental Louisville, Colorado, or Eureka, Utah, or some small Mississippi town (it has no Pennsylvania equivalent) sprawled all over the map. Since the war, it has not grown up in modern Western-style buildings, but in the old-style basha huts, a few big plaster-and-brick houses, as at the University College, and has utilized the decayed bombed buildings just as they are.

I have started work in the geology department. If I had enough energy, I could put in eighteen hours a day on the job. The geology department is two years old. The first year, U Ko Lay, president of the college, taught one class and the geography man taught another, and that was it. Last year, Mr. Sarin, a young Indian, with one year of teaching experience at Rangoon University, came up to organize the department. He and young Mr. Krishnaswamy, fresh out of an Indian university, taught all the classes and did all the work of the department. In the middle of the year, they added another young Indian as lab assistant. He has one year of industrial experience—the only practical experience in the place. The boys have really done an amazingly good job in the teeth of their inexperience, lack of guidance, remote control from Rangoon, and every possible handicap. Some things appall



me, part of the situation is hopeless, but there are substantial beginnings, and I *can* help if I can work hard enough. I shudder, however, at the amount of faith and dependence that these boys place in me. I would need to be the entire University of Colorado geology department to do what they hope of me.

The museum is just getting started, along the ancient and honorable lines of row upon row of dismal, poorly-lighted, flat rock chunks of uniform size and shape. The department apparently had a spell of unlimited funds and went hog-wild on ordering "sets." Ward's in Chicago and Krantz in Germany must have thought Christmas had come when the order blanks arrived. Ward's \$750 set of U.S. stratigraphic specimens is the pride of Mr. Sarin's heart; Krantz has supplied twenty expensive structural models that come apart, and a dozen elaborate plaster models of Victoria Falls, volcanoes, German topography, etc.—and the geography department in the other half of the building has a duplicate set. I almost cried, for there is *one* set of essential topographic maps of parts of Burma, *one* set of twenty geologic maps *hand-colored* by Mr. Sarin, very little fossil material, *no* wall maps except what I can borrow from the geography department, and, in the whole department, not more than fifty specimens of Burmese minerals and rocks.

The students have had very inadequate training in English, and practically all of that in reading or writing English, so they may understand twenty-five per cent of the lectures, delivered in English by a staff that is sixty per cent Indian, speaking fluent English at machine-gun speed and with strong local Indian accents. Few students have textbooks. One to six copies of a few textbooks or reference books in each subject are in locked cases in the library. Students may check out two books at a time, but have to work entirely from the card catalogue, for they may not look into the locked cases behind the desk—and all the cataloguing has been done, remember, by a philosophy professor, untrained in library work, and working unpaid as an extra-curricular activity. The only workable system, consequently, is to write out every lecture, have it mimeographed and distribute it ahead of time. Tests are given once a month, but they do not count. They are only practice. The sole determining factor is the exam in March, set by Rangoon, corrected and graded by Rangoon.



Verdicts on the feasibility of field trips vary. Every place I suggest to Mr. Sarin, he says "insurgents," "Communists," "disturbed area." The Burmese, on the other hand, say, "Sure, go anywhere!"

If a college president in the United States thinks he has problems, he should try U Ko Lay's job as president of University College, Mandalay, where, in a college of fifteen hundred students, not a box of thumbtacks can be issued without the president's signature, and if a faculty member is ill for a day, he must present a request for sick leave to the president, and will not be paid for the day without the president's signature. The president himself is currently ill with malaria—no thumbtacks!

#### Mandalay, July 24

So much to tell you, but *so* much too hot to think in a clear, orderly fashion: the new emerald green curtains in the living room; the electric-blue eight-inch long lizard on the tree outside; the row of newly-acquired young banana trees along the fence; the barefoot Burmese minister in the Anglican church this morning; the nightmare of missing fan belts; the olefactory assaults of the Mandalay food bazaar; the frustrations of teaching a class that changes from fifty-two members to thirty-seven members to forty-five members, of whom twenty are different from the original ones; the red-jacketed Palaung women wearing bamboo hoops around their hips; the joy of sleeping under blankets last week-end at Kalaw's five thousand feet altitude; the difficulties of desk work in Mandalay where wind and heat and dust blow in blasts through the windowless openings in the office wall; the itch of prickly heat; the gallons of fresh lime juice; the white-washed brick and cannas and hollyhocks and bright-green rice that constitute our "garden"; the fifty-seven varieties of guerilla bands that still roam the country; the *blessedness* of mail; the complications of getting into Burmese dress; the problems of field geology in the midst of devastating heat, or heavy jungle, or roads on which it is not safe to stop.

I am in school from 7:00 a.m. until noon, and from 1:30 p.m. until 4:00 p.m., and work steadily. I lecture one hour a week in Physical Geology (Freshmen), two hours a week in Physical Geology (Sophomores), one hour a week in Stratigraphy (Juniors), and one hour a week in Structural Geology (Freshmen).

The Stratigraphy has to be planned from scratch—and from the depths of a vast ignorance on the subject. There are three British reference books, *one* reference book on Burmese geology, and *no* copy of the U.S. text on which the syllabus from Rangoon is built. All lectures must be written out in detail and stencils typed. Five General Geology textbooks must serve the thirty-seven Freshmen (or fifty-two—we still do not know just who is in the class), so I serve as branch librarian and check them in and out daily. I am also planning a two-hour “practical” (lab) for Freshmen and a two-hour practical for Juniors. Explanations must be written out and stencils made for mimeographing; so must the exercises themselves.

Planning the laboratory exercises presents difficulties, for I must borrow all the topographic maps from the geography department; and from the hundred-odd areas, I do not know where to begin to select those that represent definite geologic phenomena. After I select the useful ones, it will take five to six months to order them from Rangoon. I cannot plan entirely to suit myself, for the examinations will be prepared in Rangoon, so I *must* cover the same material as they do. Field trips, an inherent part of the laboratory program at the University of Colorado, should be possible in Mandalay, but (1) Rangoon students have no good field trip areas, so no time is planned in the syllabus for field trips—and I must cover the syllabus. (2) For most of the year the heat is so blasting that the three young Indian instructors, theoretically dedicated geologists, folded up within an hour when I took them out one afternoon. (3) The school bus is only available for transportation on Sundays. (4) In the most promising field trip areas, insurgent groups of various kinds are armed and active.

In spare time, I have long discussions with Mr. Sarin, the young head of the department, about the present system and how it could be changed when Mandalay becomes an independent college—maybe three or four years from now. I listen in on Mr. Krishnaswamy's Petrology lecture, which he delivers at break-neck speed, in a strong South-India accent, but which he will give again tomorrow at dictation speed, so the youngsters can copy down essentials. I try to advise a youngster whether he should take the geology-geography-chemistry option, or the geology-chemistry-math option, and when I say, “That depends on what you want

to *do* with it," he replies, "I will work for the Government"—such a help toward sound advice! Mr. Nevaneethan, the lab assistant, comes in to tell me in a roundabout fashion that he would like me, in my spare time, to give him a complete **graduate-level** course in Field-mapping Methods and interpretation of aerial photos—beginning at the beginning!

Please do not misunderstand. This recital is neither complaint nor criticism. It is merely a statement of things as they are with me, and may give you some idea of the difficulties involved. The three young Indian men who constitute the department are friendly and co-operative and anxious to make a good department. The students are like youngsters everywhere—about the same mixture of student and loafer, keen and dull, purposeful and purposeless as I have in Boulder. The difficulties they face, however, would send our young people into a complete tailspin. My nine-months term is far too short to make even a dent. For any real usefulness, I should be here not less than five years, and should not even try to teach at all the first year, but concentrate on learning the language and soaking up the essence of the situation.

#### Mandalay, August 16

I never thought the time would come when my life would be run and regulated by a little brown man, five feet high, snaggle-toothed, and speaking only a minimum number of English words. Upendra Lal, however, takes over not only as cook for this household, but as general manager of the entire establishment, including the two memsahibs! We are never allowed to stir out of the house without reporting where we are going, how long we will stay, with whom we are going, and where we will stay if we are gone over night. He sees us off the premises, makes sure we get back in, and expects a complete report on our doings while we were gone. I wish I had his sure-fire technique for extracting information. One night I left the side door shut but unlocked—and got the dickens for it in no uncertain terms the next morning, in spite of the fact that his son is our night watchman. Tyler gave the shiftless sweeper an advance of fifty kyats on his month's salary, which *is* fifty kyats, and Upendra Lal found out and wanted to know why she did that without consulting him. I was feeling wobbly one afternoon, and decided at dinnertime that I would

like hot tea instead of cold lime juice. The laconic reply came back from the kitchen "No tea"—just like that! Of course, there was probably no boiling water ready, and it does take considerable time to heat it on a miniscule charcoal stove, but Upendra Lal was making no explanations nor apologies—just "No tea." He is, however, an excellent cook and does well within the limits of the bazaar, where there is no beef of any kind, no ham, but mainly tough "mutton" (that is more probably goat) and equally tough chicken. He plans the meals, and runs an efficient household—the sweeper would do even less without our little Napoleon riding herd. Every so often he brightens up, peers up at us from under bent eyebrows, and produces some news, or enlightenment, or anecdote that is highly diverting. The other day, the bearer served lunch as usual, solemnly as usual, wordless as usual. He served tea and dinner the same way. He took the unhemmed napkins I asked him to have his wife hem, with no lightening of the solemnity, and only his usual "Yes, sir." After dinner, Upendra Lal brought him into the living room to announce, with a wide grin, that poor Maung Nyi had been on tenterhooks all lunch time waiting word from home, and that night after lunch he had received word that his wife had a baby daughter! But it would not be fitting for Maung Nyi to tell us himself.

One week, I was in disgrace for sure. My digestive system went out of gear, and I was completely disinterested in food. At home, I could just quit eating in peace, and stave off starvation with cereal and milk—but not in this house. After a day or two, Upendra Lal showed up in the living room after dinner—the conference time—to complain bitterly that one memsahib was eating his food but the other one was not, and why so? He had thrown away two bananas, and curry was left over, and we had not eaten the extra-special treat of apples he bought, and the waste of one pya is a National Crime in Upendra Lal's eyes. I apologized humbly, and explained that I would eat more when I felt better, so he decided that it was the heat and I could be forgiven. But Tyler had to cut down her appetite to match mine, for we got nothing the next few days but cold sliced chicken and bread and butter, and she got ravenous! I sometimes wish there were six of us in the house, for U.L. cooks enough for six, and then we eat it—or else! We had stewed pears three days in a row, because I

asked him to get some when we were in the bazaar. He asked if we liked prunes and figs—I like prunes and Tyler likes figs—so we had huge bowls of them on the table until we had consumed every last one. It took four days steady going!

Down at the geology building is another of my managers. San Hto, aged about seventeen, is our "Pune" (peon). We have an older man named Aung Ba, but he does not seem to do much. San Hto, on the other hand, does everything, and has more just plain common sense than I have encountered many places. He speaks no English, though I came across him, when he thought no one was around, studying an English primer, and doing a lot better with it than I do with Burmese. I break rules by carrying the huge departmental "Record Book" around with me when I go to class, instead of following San Hto and Record Book in procession. I lose caste by whanging rocks myself when I want a specimen trimmed down, and I cannot explain to him the things I want done in the museum, where I am spending every spare hour just now. He follows me around until he finds out what I am doing, then he takes it away from me and does it more effectively. He came up with an idea to improve my work the other day. I was unhappy about an iron stain on a handsome beryl specimen that I was putting in a case (one of the hundred pounds of mineral and rock specimens that I brought with me in my trunk!). I was trying to take the stain off by rubbing, when San Hto reached over, took it away from me, trotted down the corridor to the hand-operated grinding wheel, and came back with surfaces nicely cleaned off. I also need a San Hto in Boulder, for he makes sure that I do not overwork; on the dot of four o'clock, he comes into my office and begins to shut the shutters on the windows, and I can either go home or stay and suffocate.

Classes are *beginning*, after two months, to settle down, but students still drift in and out, and about half of my eight Juniors turn in any work at all. They are getting used to me, however, and I am getting to know some of them, and we enjoy each other, even if we are not accomplishing much. The Freshmen had stabilized at fifty-two for three straight days, when someone got in a panic because he heard that Rangoon University would not admit a boy to Mining Engineering without the chemistry-physics-math option, so they all panicked about the idea that a geology

degree would mean no Government job at the end, and that is the GOAL of every one of them, so to-day, fifteen of them were missing. From a selfish point of view, I rather hope they change their options for we do not have enough material to handle fifty-two of them, and if they all come back, I will have to split the lab and teach one from 2:00 to 4:00 on Saturday afternoon.

For a while, I despaired of ever getting a chance to teach even the students who did come to school, for we had four holidays in three weeks—Martyrs' Day, a Muslim religious holiday, the Full Moon of Wazo (beginning of Buddhist Lent), and a Burmese Flower Festival.

On the Full Moon of Wazo, everybody goes to the pagoda, so we went too, with the two Toke Gale ladies, whose grandfather was in the court of King Mindon, the second last king of Burma. Tramping around the pagodas with bare feet is not as bad on dry days as on wet days, but I guess I never will understand why people have to take off shoes, when it is all right to spit betel juice around and dogs and cows wander freely through the corridors and courtyards. The day was partly religious and partly picnic, and the whole atmosphere much more informal than in our churches. Some folks would be praying earnestly, while right alongside, someone else would be spread out for a nap, or squatting on his heels chewing betel or smoking a cheroot. The Toke Gales led us through everything with no compunctions, and at least half the prayer-meeting abandoned all attempt to listen to the pongyi and gave us their undivided attention. Many village folk had come in for the festival, and some of the small fry had not seen very many white women (there have not been many around during these last years), so they were fascinated and followed us around. The eight-to-ten year olds lugged babies on their hips, for there is always a baby, and it is the job of the older ones to carry it around and keep it happy at all times. At one pagoda, there are an "emerald" buddha, a "diamond" buddha, and a "ruby" buddha that are brought out only five times a year, so we went to see them. They are about two inches high, and from the perspective of about ten feet away, and in dim candle light, I would guess the materials to be jade, crystal quartz, and sardonyx, but they were valuable enough to be fenced off from the crowd, and an attendant took vials of perfume and handfuls of flower



petals to pour over them. An armed guard was inside the fence, but when we were there the armed guard was on the floor, with three friends, and they appeared to be playing poker.

The Full Moon of Wazo was also the full moon of Wahoo for the canines, and the nights were screaming horrors as packs of these hysterical pye dogs all proclaimed the biological urge. The three W.H.O. nurses nearby acquired two four-weeks-old pye-dog puppies whose mother had died. Their cook's wife is the boss in that house, so she took over, and the nurses came home several times to find the pups being breast-fed by our sweeper's wife, who has an unweaned child, and who seems perfectly satisfied with the arrangement.

(To be concluded in the Spring issue.)

## authors

(continued from page 228)

of the American Society of Newspaper Editors. A graduate of the University of Wisconsin, he took his first news job with the *Tribune* and eventually became its editor at the age of twenty-seven. His article was the 1956 Crosman Memorial Lecture delivered at the University of Colorado during the Newspaper Week sponsored by the College of Journalism.

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